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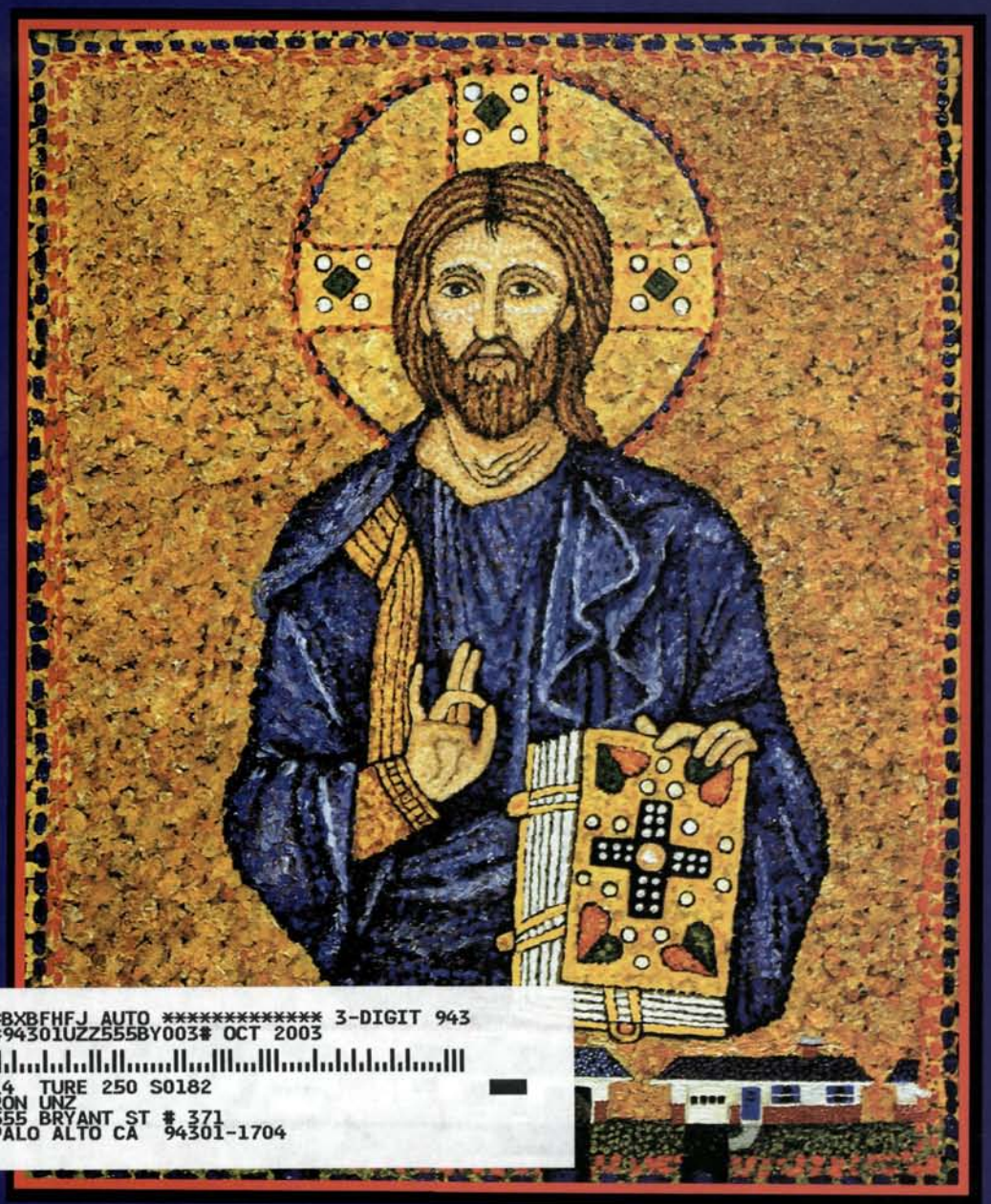

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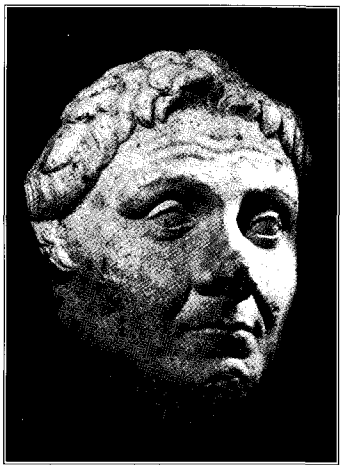

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and Italians . . .
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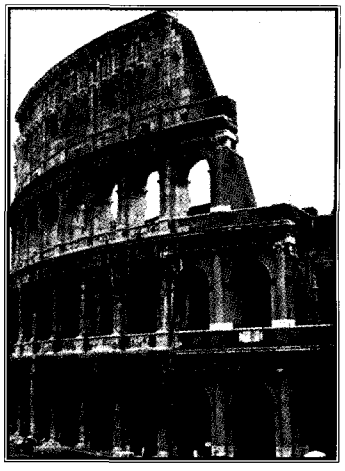
theologian **Roberto de Mattei** and
reactionary political insider **Marco Respinti**



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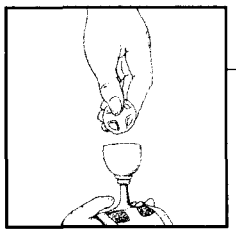

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On the American Empire

While I agree with much of what Justin Raimondo wrote in his review of Chalmers Johnson's *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* ("An Empire, If You Can Bear It," *Opinions*, September), I must take issue with some of his "facts." First, the "American military machine" has not become autonomous; it is, rather, completely under the thumb of an irresponsible national executive. With the notable exception of Hugh Shelton, the service chiefs never gave their blessing to the Kosovo "adventure," nor to Haiti, nor Bosnia. However, recognizing their subservience to civilian authority, they knuckled in each case.

With the exception of the Marine Corps, morale in the services is at rock bottom, thanks to a regular diet of political correctness served up by a secretary of defense who lacks any interest whatsoever in the people who make up our Armed Forces. A recent query of middle-grade officer students at the Army's Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth showed complete distrust of their uniformed leaders, in part because of the continuing feminization of the Army.

Finally, the defense industry that permitted this nation to overwhelm the Soviets in military capability is now only a faint shadow of its former self. The local Lockheed Missiles and Space Co. employed over 30,000 people 15 years ago. It is now down to about 8,000 and had to merge with Martin Marietta for either to survive. As for the services growing, the Navy now consists of about 320 ships, not much over half of what it had at the peak of the Reagan buildup. Moreover, projected strength in 2010 is about 200 ships.

Regarding quixotic embarrassments such as Kosovo, I agree with Mr. Raimondo. However, we do have legitimate interests in areas around the world, such as the South China Sea, a major focal point of world shipping. Freedom of the seas has been a major objective of American foreign policy since the founding of the republic.

—Robert C. Whitten
Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve (Ret.)
Cupertino, CA

Mr. Raimondo Replies:

Commander Whitten is certainly right that the current administration is not popular with the military and that morale in the services is low: After all, the prospect that you will be sent, at a moment's notice, to the four corners of the earth to administer a dose of "humanitarianism" to the locals is not what most servicemen signed up for. It is like auditioning for the part of Rambo only to wind up being cast as Mother Teresa.

As for the idea that the military has become "autonomous," what Chalmers Johnson and other critics of the military-industrial complex have said is that the momentum for the expansion of our overseas empire is built into the system. Commander Whitten complains arms manufacturers are merging to offset the losses of the post-Cold War era. But what is the alternative? To continue to expand our capacity to make war even as the threat of war recedes?

The Cold War is over; no nation on earth poses a direct threat to our legitimate interests—not even in the South China Sea. One word from the American president could reduce all of China to a cloud of radioactive dust; the only threat we face is our own hubris.

It may be true that, with our present resources, we are "overextended," this doesn't mean that those resources ought to be increased. Rather, the scope of the mission should be radically reduced. Why do we need to be able to fight two major wars simultaneously? We don't need to build more warships: Let the workers who formerly were employed by Lockheed and Martin Marietta find a more productive occupation in the private sector.

Regarding Commander Whitten's final point about the United States enforcing "freedom of the seas," I can only hint at the questions it raises by asking where else, aside from the South China Sea, this alleged "freedom" needs to be protected. Will we now claim hegemony over all the world's oceans, and even such landlocked lakes as the Caspian Sea?

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THE SERBS, after a decade of being treated as the designated demons of Europe, were, in the first week of October, transformed by Western media and politicians into a nation of Walesas and Havels. The ethnic cleansing and mass rape stories were gone, replaced by those of freedom, democracy, and gallantry. As Matthew Parris remarked in the *Times* of London, "We love them/We love them not. If I was a brave Serb/beastly Serb, I'd be feeling confused this morning." The entire Serbian nation was humanized in about five minutes, which must be a record even for CNN's spin doctors.

But most Serbs did not care what the rest of the world thought of them as they took to the streets to depose Slobodan Milosevic. That misshapen communist apparatchik—who had never been any kind of nationalist, let alone a "greater Serbian chauvinist"—was determined to maintain power for as long as he could feed on the ever-shrinking innards of Serbia. But he finally overplayed his hand when he hastily called an election for September 24. In spite of controlling the media and the money, Milosevic was beaten, convincingly and on the first round, by an unassuming lawyer of integrity and intellect, Vojislav Kostunica. Having lost the vote, he tried to steal the election by fraud.

Until election day, even Milosevic's enemies had grudging respect for his creative deviousness. But when he found himself reduced to stealing wallets in broad daylight, he was doomed. The magic was gone. In the aftermath of the election, his subjects lost their respect for him, and thus they no longer feared him.

Kostunica and his opposition partners were prepared for the attempted theft. They immediately denounced the federal election commission's claim that Kostunica was one percentage point short of a simple majority and called for a general strike. The catastrophic election results and the growing revolt threw Milosevic's machine into a panic. "The Boss" obviously did not have an ace up his sleeve, and the initial trickle of desertions from his ranks turned into a flood. The deserters included some astute police generals whose pragmatism was coupled with insight into the mood in the streets. The fear that the military would violently suppress the protests—as it did in March 1991, when Milosevic ordered tanks to the streets of Belgrade—proved unfounded. Finally, on October 5, the police let hundreds of thousands of demonstrators take over the parliament building and the main TV station. Milosevic's reign had ended.

Milosevic's main problem in the crucial ten days after the election was that the prospect of deliverance from his 13-year rule had irrevocably gripped the imagination of millions of Serbs. They could see the end of the disastrous Milosevic era, and with it the end of sanctions and of the institutionalized paranoia that thrived on Washington's Serbophobic Balkans policy, and the vision proved contagious—even within Milosevic's establishment.

At the time of this writing, with every Western worthy and his uncle packing bags for Belgrade, there is still some talk of an attempted comeback by Milosevic, but the danger is probably exaggerated. As Serbia's deposed ruling couple ponder their shrinking options in the isolation of their suburban villa, they are more likely belatedly attempting to come to terms with reality. Their fate may be humiliating, but it is still preferable to that of previous Balkan despots on a losing streak—as the ghosts of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu could testify.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

RU-486 is, by now, probably neatly stacked on pharmacy shelves across the fruited plain, right next to the Raid and Ritalin, ready for every woman who needs a quick "final solution," with or without parental consent—or that of us knuckle-dragging sperm donors.

It's legal now, and, of course, that means it's ethical, too. Not like what that other guy in Germany had in mind . . . well, you know. Hey, if doctors prescribe what Pat Buchanan calls a "human pesticide," it must be all right . . . right? That's our federal government at work, folks. You know, the same one that gave us Prohibition, public schools, income taxes, and Waco. Actually, this wonder drug, chemically known as Mifepristone and marketed as the "morning-after" pill, has been around for decades before it was finally introduced to American lab rats. Sanctioned by Planned Parenthood and endorsed by the National Organization for Women, Mifeprex (the most common brand) is as popular in Europe as Viagra is in America, and it probably will be blessed by the next Pope, whoever *she* happens to be. And now it appears that RU-486 will soon be manufactured in China, a country that already has a track record when it comes to tainted drugs, campaign financing, and population control.

The French invented this stuff, picking up where the Germans left off, and with equal efficiency. Sometimes history is funny that way. Perhaps they're just trying to get even with us for giving them the Big Mac. Coincidentally, RU-486 was approved by the FDA the same day Pierre Trudeau died.

Naturally, feminists still have much work to do, including collecting enough tax dollars from Christian pro-lifers to make sure that all women, especially those who can't afford it and don't know any better, have access to this deadly product. Who wants more of *them* around anyway? Too bad the little parasites won't live long enough to sue the pharmaceutical companies for peddling their poison; or better yet, their own mothers, who were stupid enough not to heed the admonition: WARNING! This product kills when used as intended. There will be warning labels, won't there?

The times have changed, and that's precisely what the feminists are counting on. To them, RU-486 is not unlike modern warfare. The lines are blurred; there are no moral absolutes, only varying shades of gray. There is no need for soldiers in this battle, which will be fought with smart bombs and antiseptics. There will be no surgery, no mess to clean up, no dead bodies broadcast every night on CNN from halfway around the world; no babies being dissected inside the womb or murdered moments after taking their first breath; no guilt, no Normandy, no napalm. And no blood and pain. The silent scream will be easily drowned out by the voices of Madeleine Albright and Patricia Ireland lecturing us on global responsibility, ethnic cleansing, population control, and human rights. The only sights we'll see are those filtered through the political lens of the New World Order.

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How easy it was for Bill Clinton to bomb innocent civilians in Serbia and to devastate all those warlords hiding out in aspirin factories and milk plants in Ethiopia and Sudan! It was a cinch, especially from 30,000 feet: quick, clean, and legal. Make it simple enough, and killing's a snap. Stealth, slick marketing, and good timing make it easy to swallow, just like . . . a pill. Abortions are no different. But contrary to Bill Clinton's perverted logic, it doesn't make them any rarer, just more convenient. Unborn babies were better off in the days of back-alley abortions than in the new era of instant infanticide.

"What we're dealing with here are little more than fertilized eggs," as one lovely young feminist who actually witnessed an abortion, albeit performed the old-fashioned way, so eloquently put it. "A mere piece of rice in a spoonful of blood," she continued, one romantic evening over a dinner comprising very much the same ingredients. Never mind that at one time she looked no better, and was probably more alive—physically as well as spiritually. Who needs concentration camps when we have government-run HMOs? Where will all the pro-lifers go to picket when the clinic is right down the block at their local Wal-Mart? And who in his right mind is going to shoot his friendly pharmacist for pushing the finest weapon in the arsenal against life since Hitler's death factories?

—*Joe Prussing*

ROCKFORD doesn't often make the national news, but when it does, you can be certain it's not because of any good that's happening here. Our latest brush with fame came on the last day of September, when a 32-year-old Catholic priest from a parish just south of Rockford rammed his car into the local abortuary. Fr. John Earl then took an ax and made kindling of two heavy wooden doors in "Fort Turner," which used to be a public school. While the house of death was closed for business, the owner, Wayne Webster, lives in the building, and he confronted Father Earl with a shotgun, firing two shells before the priest laid down his axe.

The reaction was predictable: Before anyone knew any details, some local pro-lifers proclaimed Father Earl a modern-day hero, while others unequivocally condemned him. The local Gannett paper, of course, used the attack as an opportunity to condemn excessive zeal on the part of the pro-life movement and to praise the FDA's decision to approve the human pesticide RU-486. A local radio talk-show host marveled at coincidence: Wasn't it "ironic" that he'd had Richard Ragsdale, the abortionist, on his show the day before the attack to discuss how RU-486 will change the nature of the abortion debate?

The true irony is that neither the talk-show host nor the local pro-lifers who sponsored the annual Life Chain the day after the attack seem to have considered the role that their actions may have played in motivating Father Earl. Activists on both sides of the question know that the graphic public discussion of abortion (or, in the case of the Life Chain, the pornographic depiction of aborted children on posters) cannot help but arouse emotions. Father Earl, of course, is ultimately responsible for his own actions, and—contrary to some letters to the editor comparing him to Christ throwing the moneychangers out of the temple—what he did was, at best, a violation of property rights. (The temple, as Christ pointed out, was His Father's house; this hellhole belongs to Wayne Webster.) But the unceasing refrain of "America's ongoing holocaust" will ultimately lead some to conclude that the time has come to quit talking and start saving babies—and desperate men will employ desperate measures.

In national opinion polls, a majority of Americans claim to support outlawing abortion except in cases of rape, incest, and saving the life of the mother, and pro-life sentiment here in Rockford runs even higher. But pro-lifers have taken the extreme stand of demanding a human-life amendment to the Constitution, and that has allowed them to make the compromises that keep "Doctor" Ragsdale in business. The truth is, local pro-lifers could shut down Fort Turner through zoning laws, by making abortion the major issue in Rockford's mayoral and aldermanic campaigns. But as we approach another local election in April, local pro-lifers are crisscrossing the city, putting up Bush-Cheney signs in the vain hope that the Republican candidate who recently betrayed them on abortion will do more to protect unborn children than the Democratic candidate who sold them out ten years ago.

Russell Kirk was fond of quoting Edmund Burke's admonition that we shouldn't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. By setting the impossible as our goal, we excuse ourselves from doing what can be done. Abortion will not be stopped by axe-wielding Catholic priests or Republican presidents, and *Roe* v. *Wade* will probably never be overturned. The best we can hope to do is shut down our local abortuary and pray that others follow our lead. Until we can muster the moral and political will to act locally, the rivers of blood will continue to flow.

—*Scott P. Richert*

THE ONION caused quite a stir a couple of weeks ago when it was read by an unsuspecting Christian. Through the power of the internet and e-mail, a satirical story entitled "Harry Potter Books Spark Rise in Satanism Among Children" was forwarded from one concerned Christian to another. Chilling (and entirely fictional) examples of blatant Satanism encouraged by J.K. Rowling were cut and pasted into the e-mail warning, including: "'The Harry Potter books are cool, 'cause they teach you all about magic and how you can use it to control people and get revenge on your enemies,' said Hartland, WI, 10-year-old Craig Nowell, a recent convert to the New Satanic Order Of The Black Circle. 'I want to learn the Cruciatus Curse, to make my muggle science teacher suffer for giving me a D.'"

The humorists at the Madison, Wisconsin-based *Onion* also cited a fictional article from the *Times* of London, which included the following spurious quote from Rowling: "I think it's absolute rubbish to protest children's books on the grounds that they are luring children to Satan . . . People should be praising them for that!"

But the *Onion* did not invent a September 1 story in the *Times* that described "Harry Potter liturgy." It seems the Church of England, indefatigable in her efforts to reach a lost generation of young people, has molded the Service of the Word from the once-great and oft-revised *Book of Common Prayer* into a seeker service for young Potterites.

"A banner featuring a serpent," reports the *Times*, "representing the House of Slytherin . . . will adorn the 1960's church of All Saints in Guildford, Surrey, this Sunday. Banners of the other three Hogwarts houses will also be displayed."

Campus Crusade evangelicals in England expressed outrage at the C of E, saying she is "importing evil symbols into

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the Church." Of course, they don't mind dramas or Christian rock during the worship service. But Rowling's books have touched a nerve in English Christendom; like Halloween, Harry Potter has become a symbol of the latent New Age, neo-occultist movement, waiting to devour the children of the kingdom.

American Christians have been on one distracting crusade after another since the days of temperance and Prohibition. Of late, however, the method of attack against popular culture has shifted from search-and-destroy missions to assimilation enterprises. When young people were threatened (or so evangelicals believed) by garbled backmasked messages such as "get the gun" in Ozzy Osbourne's "Suicide Solution" and "some of us smoke marijuana" in Queen's "Another One Bites the Dust," Christian rock bands such as Petra emerged, playing churches and youth crusades. Now even Billy Graham cannot have a televised meeting without Christian rock artists Michael W. Smith or DC Talk appearing.

The inevitable "Christian" Harry Potter series will emerge sometime next year from Baker, Zondervan, or Sparrow—unless Sparrow's *Bible Man* fills the longings of young would-be-Potterites. *Bible Man* is played by washed-up teen heartthrob (now middle-aged and overweight) Willie Aames of *Eight Is Enough* and *Charles in Charge* fame. Wearing yellow tights and using pyrotechnics, Aames quotes Scripture verses from the New International Version of the Bible, defeating enemies such as Dr. Decepto and Madame Glitz.

There was a time when Christendom encouraged a belief in elves and fairies, and Chesterton even said that it helped to develop young imaginations capable of believing in more than what can be seen or proven through scientific theory. C.S. Lewis enriched young minds and imaginations through his *Chronicles of Narnia* series, and Tolkien through his *Lord of the Rings*, both of which had hefty doses of fantasy, talking animals, magic, and wizards.

Rowling is, to be sure, not a Christian, and Harry Potter is not looking for any type or shadow of Jesus Christ in the wardrobe. Christian parents probably should shield their children from Harry Potter, though perhaps with less fanfare. There is a danger of overstating the case. Kids who are already immersed in the world of American popular culture will say, "What's the big deal?" Satan does not emerge from the Potter books or from backwardly masked LPs—at least, not the Satan they are looking for. Satan, though underneath a roaring lion, is more subtle than any beast of the field, preferring to use channels such as Christian superstar Amy Grant to raise the question, "Did God really say 'Thou shalt not commit adultery?'"

Rich cultural catechization at the earliest stages of life will yield an adolescent who could easily read a page or two of Potter, laugh at the silly neopaganism, and toss it into the burn pile. Either way, life is too precious and short to waste our children's time on American/Western pop culture—Christianized or not.

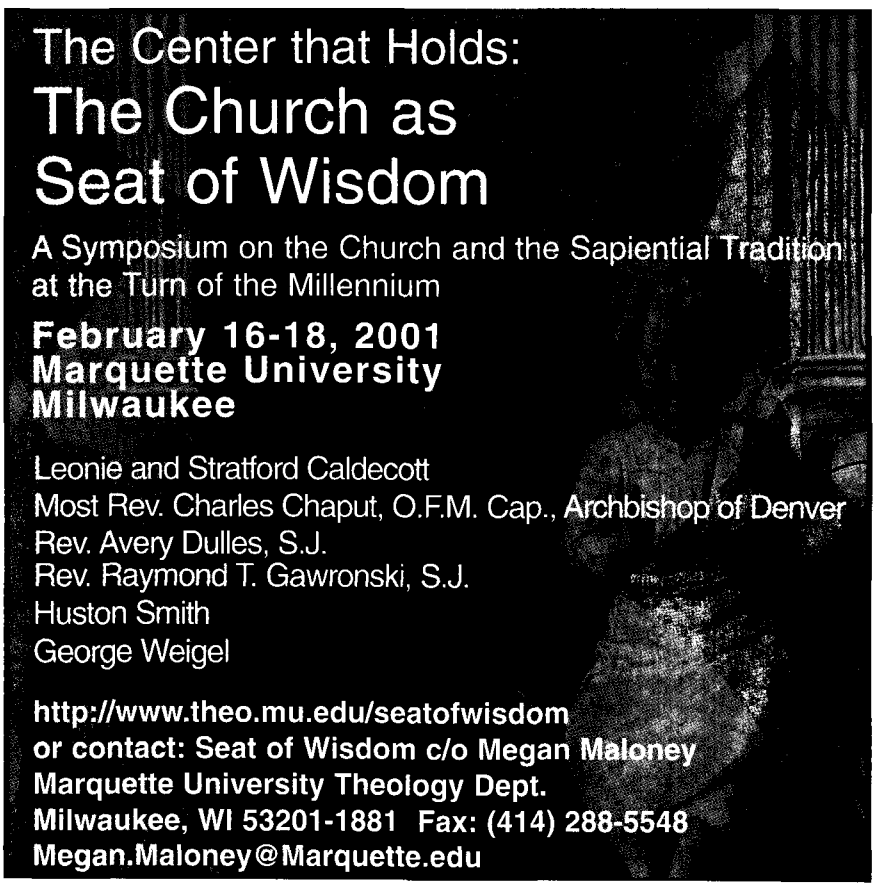
—*Aaron D. Wolf*

MOLDOVA'S PARTITION may be imminent. While the U.S. Embassy in Moscow denied that American spooks and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) intend to divide that tiny country, the denial itself was enough to convince most Russian and Moldovan/Rumanian patriots that the plan is probably already under way.

The State Department was reacting to a September 23 article in *Izvestiya*, which claimed that talks between Russia and Moldova on the fate of the breakaway "Dniester Moldovan Republic" had broken down because of a "secret plan" to hand Moldova over to Rumania and the Dniester region to Ukraine. (The "Dniester Republic," sometimes referred to as Transdnistria, is a predominately Slavic, Russian-speaking region. In 1940, it was fused with the former Rumanian province of Bessarabia to form the Soviet Republic of Moldova.)

According to *Izvestiya*, the plan would involve annexation of the Dniester region by a nationalist Ukraine. The paper also implied that the West is backing the resurgent Ukrainian nationalist movement in pro-NATO Western Ukraine as a prelude to further NATO expansion. As it did in Kosovo, however, NATO will exploit nationalism only tactically: The real aim is the unconditional removal of the Russian 14th Army from the Dniester region, paving the way for an eventual NATO military presence. Meanwhile, a suitably tamed and reunited Rumania would be absorbed into the OSCE and eventually the European Union. The price, of course, would be the eradication of a distinct Rumanian identity.

Izvestiya also claimed that the West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had forced the delay in the Russian-Moldovan talks because of concerns over a plan (advanced by former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov) to transform Moldova into a confederation, leaving the Moldovan state intact while granting the Dniester region autonomy. Under the American initiative, however, Russia would carry out a phased withdrawal of the 14th Army, financed by the OSCE.

The Primakov plan, which appears to be supported by both the Moldovans and the Russians (at least for now), is strongly opposed by NATO: Russia would still maintain ties with an autonomous Dniester Republic, ties that would likely include a guarantee of Dniester self-determination should Moldova decide to rejoin Rumania. Moreover, the region would probably seek admittance to the Russian-Belarussian union under such circumstances, thus maintaining Russian influence in the region—which U.S. foreign policymakers do not want.

Another Russian newspaper, *Kommersant*, pointed out that the U.S. Congress had recently allocated $45 million in "military assistance" to the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. The apparent purpose of this aid is to weaken Russian influence in those states and to strengthen a Western-oriented regional bloc.

The net effect of the NATO/OSCE/E.U. machinations would be to isolate Russia by creating, on the periphery of the former Soviet empire, a NATO-dominated buffer zone that just so happens to include a number of states acting as gas and oil transit lines. The importance of these states will only increase as deposits of oil in the Caspian Sea are developed. Small wonder, then, that an increasing number of Russians view the West with suspicion and hostility, NATO's ultimate objective is to weaken, if not dismember, Russia.

—*Denis Petrov*

RAOUL BERGER, R.I.P. On September 23, we lost one of the great jurisprudential fighters for Truth, Justice, and the American Way. Berger, late Charles Warren Senior Fellow at Harvard University, former professor of law at the University of California's Boalt Hall, one-time second concertmaster for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, died at the age of 99. Berger's career as a violinist preceded his life as a legal scholar, as did his days as a practicing lawyer and New Deal bureaucrat. While Raoul was a hero and a Dutch uncle to many of us judicial conservatives, he was a scourge to most of the legal academy. A lifetime Democrat whose hero was Thomas Jefferson, he claimed that he valued truth more than the results he desired, and he did more than any man to discredit the liberal activist jurisprudence of the Warren Court.

As a spate of obituaries noted, Berger was a darling of liberals when he provided, in his first two books, ammunition for the enemies of Richard Nixon. Through convincing research into materials from English and early American history, Berger showed that impeachable offenses did not have to be actual crimes but could include non-criminal abuse of the office. (A few of us would later cite him in hearings concerning President Clinton, a fact conveniently missed by the media in the encomiums to Berger.) Berger's *Executive Privilege* also cast doubt on Nixon's use of national security as a justification for not turning evidence over to Congress, and this book could also be used to expose President Clinton's repeated production of new and absurd Presidential privileges, although the obituaries again failed to make this observation.

Press accounts of Berger's life did observe, however, that following Richard Nixon's forced removal from office, liberals distanced themselves from Berger as his further researches revealed a conspicuous lack of historical support for the theory the 14th Amendment "incorporated" the Bill of Rights. In Berger's most important work, *Government by Judiciary* (1977), he explained that the 14th Amendment was not meant to alter fundamentally the distribution of power between state and federal governments; rather, it was simply designed to allow the newly freed slaves to enjoy the same rights to property ownership and the ability to make and enforce contracts that their white fellow citizens did. Berger rejected the theory, maintained by Hugo Black and others who believed, based on the thin evidence of statements by a couple of legislative sponsors of the 14th Amendment, that it was designed to "incorporate" the prohibitions of the Bill of Rights against the states. The incorporation theory, of course, served as the basis for the Warren Court (and the Berger Court and the Rehnquist Court) to expand the reach of the federal government and to circumscribe state and local governments in previously unimaginable ways.

Once *Government by Judiciary* was published, Berger became *persona non grata* in most of the legal academy. While he maintained his position as Charles Warren Fellow at Harvard for several years thereafter, he never really felt accepted by his Cambridge colleagues. If what Raoul had argued was true (and it most probably was), then the Warren Court's decisions on desegregation, criminal law, and voting rights were all illegitimate. If Berger was right, then the ideology of activist jurisprudence, to which most of the faculty at Harvard and other Ivy League law schools subscribed, was built on something very close to fraud. For most of the last quarter of the 20th century, Berger was simply ignored by those practicing constitutional law in the academy, and his trail-blazing work was never cited by the United States Supreme Court, although several state Supreme Courts and a few lower federal courts did rely on his scholarship.

Perhaps it was the fact that Berger was not particularly well treated by the Ivy Leaguers that led Berger to endow a chair in his own name at Northwestern University School of Law, his *alma mater*, a chair which I now hold. For that reason, I don't pretend to be objective where Berger is concerned, and as far as I know he was the only living legal historian ever to endow a chair in legal history in his own name. Modest he was not, nor was he shy or retiring. Anyone who wrote a law-review article or a book review critical of Berger's views would discover, within a couple of months, that Berger had written a scathing response, and those who dared write a rebuttal to Berger's reply soon found themselves confronted in print with a Berger rejoinder. The hundreds of Berger law-review articles often took the form of this nearly endless dialogue, and most of Berger's assailants eventually succumbed, giving him the last word.

Berger's work was not without some flaws: As a scholar, he was a great trial lawyer, and he occasionally used his evidence a bit too selectively for some tastes, or reached conclusions for which he had perhaps a bit less support than some scholars would have demanded. He was not above the occasional *ad hominem* attack, both on the framers of the 14th Amendment and on younger scholars

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who dared to question his assertions. Which is all to say that Berger was human, rather than divine. He was writing vigorously until almost the end, and it was still pretty damn good. Berger was one of the few writers who could successfully demand that student law-review editors refrain from changing any of his text, and you angered him at your peril. If there are law reviews published beyond the Pearly Gates, Justices Warren and Brennan will now be brought to task for eternity, but Raoul Berger will be missed here.

—*Stephen B. Presser*

PIERRE TRUDEAU'S DEATH at the age of 80 unleashed an outpouring of public emotion and grief that has not been seen in Canada since the death of the country's founder, Sir John A. MacDonald. Dignitaries from all over the world, including close friends Jimmy Carter and Fidel Castro (who was greeted by a large crowd at Notre Dame Basilica shouting "Viva Fidel!"), attended the former Liberal prime minister's funeral in Montreal. It was only fitting that Trudeau, the most destructive Canadian prime minister of the 20th century, should be acknowledged by fellow leftists whose policies and goals he did so much to advance. A man of immense intellectual talent, willpower, and panache, Trudeau ruled Canada for nearly 16 years, from 1968 until 1984. Throughout his long reign, he led a sweeping revolution that transformed the country politically, economically, and culturally.

A constitutional lawyer and the son of a millionaire, Trudeau was obsessed with Quebec separatism. Like all leftists, he despised romantic nationalism, and his *raison d'être* for entering politics in 1965 was to crush the burgeoning independence movement in Quebec. The irony, however, is that Trudeau's vision of a bilingual, multicultural Canada based on a strong central government and ten equal provinces was deeply resented by most French Quebecers. During the 1970's, separatist sentiment grew in Quebec, culminating in the election, in 1976, of the Parti Québécois, led by Trudeau's arch-nemesis, the folksy René Lévesque. The movement became a permanent fixture on the Canadian political landscape: Rather than slaying the separatist dragon, Trudeau only strengthened it.

Praised by many in the media for his "devotion to Canada," Trudeau in fact despised his nation's cultural and historic traditions. He hated the country's Tory heritage, especially its bicultural and binational reality of an English Canada and a Franco-Quebec held together by a respect for the rule of law and links with the British crown. He sought to eradicate the old Canada through policies such as official bilingualism, multiculturalism, native collectivism, and the disastrous patriation of the Constitution in 1982.

Trudeau's greatest mistake was supporting not only the new Constitution but the American-style Bill of Rights that came with it, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. By empowering Canada's Supreme Court to decide on the constitutionality of legislation, Trudeau undermined the traditional supremacy of Parliament in making laws. He created a rights-based society that caters to every conceivable left-wing interest group: homosexuals, animal-rights zealots, pro-abortionists, peddlers of pornography, and advocates of euthanasia.

Trudeau also championed massive increases in government spending. He turned the country into a milktoast version of Sweden with anemic economic growth, crushing taxation, and a crippling national debt. He imposed wage and price controls; he implemented the National Energy Policy that discriminated against oil-producers in the West; and he supported nationalization of some key industries and resources. In short, his economic policies eroded Canada's standard of living, which was once the envy of the world.

While his economic record was one of obvious failure, Trudeau had more success in altering the country's social mores, liberalizing Canada's abortion and sodomy laws. Trudeau also embodied the chic radicalism of the counterculture. He simultaneously scandalized and titillated ordinary Canadians by wearing sandals in the prime minister's office, dating Hollywood stars such as Barbra Streisand and Margot Kidder, and—most famously—marrying Margaret Trudeau, 29 years his junior. Their short and tempestuous marriage fascinated the public, as the media reported stories of Trudeau's infidelities and Margaret's notorious escapades with the Rolling Stones. Even the heroin-addicted moral degenerate Keith Richards had higher standards, once claiming that he would never allow *his* wife to tour with the Rolling Stones.

Trudeau represented everything that was wrong with the 1960's—its rampant hedonism, sexual permissiveness, self-righteousness, fiscal irresponsibility, and puerile humanitarianism. Sadly, the mass mourning generated by his death, and the adulation he continues to inspire among the Canadian public, reveals that, in many ways, he triumphed over the country's better nature. He mesmerized the nation into loving him, while wreaking havoc on Canadian soil.

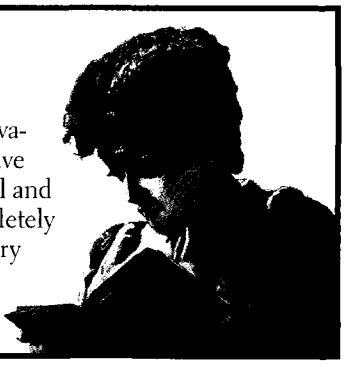
—*Jeffrey Thomas Kuhner*

OBITER DICTA: Our poet this month is **Brendan Galvin** of Truro, Massachusetts. Mr. Galvin is the author of 12 collections of poetry, including *The Strength of a Named Thing* and *Sky and Island Light* (Louisiana State University Press). In 1998, his translation of Sophocles' *Women of Trachis* appeared in the Penn Greek Drama Series. Mr. Galvin has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Sotheby and Levinson prizes, and the first O.B. Hardison, Jr., Prize from the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Our art this month is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe.

BOOK OF NEXT MONTH

Our book for next month is a brilliant paleoconservative manifesto, an insightful critique of the destructive forces of modernity that also offers hope for cultural and moral renewal. Of course, it has not been completely written yet; watch the pages of *Chronicles* every month for new installments.



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Hand-Me-Down Truth

by Thomas Fleming

In 1912, a group of Oxford fellows began meeting to work out a minimalist common creed that would be acceptable to all Christians. William Temple, future archbishop of Canterbury, was the guiding spirit of the group, which argued its way down to an inoffensive consensus entitled *Foundations*. The Oxford Seven ended up setting aside miracles, the Resurrection of the body, and other difficult articles of faith on the same grounds that American Presbyterians were to do in the 20's: Such notions might be useful or even true, but they could not be required of Christians living in a scientific age.

The explicit point was to fit the doctrines to the temper of the times. Ronald Knox, then still an Anglo-Catholic, was supposed to have been the eighth Oxford man, but he bowed out; and when *Foundations* was issued, he responded with a Drydenesque verse satire, "Absolute and Abitofhell," in which he ridiculed the substitution of marketing for theology: "When suave politeness, tempr'ing bigot Zeal / Corrected *I believe* to *One does feel.*"

Knox was never much interested in feeling. It would not entirely do him an injustice to say that he viewed the discipline of religion as a gradual perfection of the will. However, the problem with Archbishop Temple and with other liberal Christians is not that they feel too much but that they think too little or too weakly. Credulous in their acceptance of every modern intellectual from Marx to Darwin to Freud, they could not take the trouble even to consider the authentic foundations of Christian belief.

As C.S. Lewis was to point out, there are people who have trouble accepting the miracle at Cana that turned water into wine but claim to believe that some being we call God created the universe out of nothing. People say it is because "science" has made miracles impossible, but all of this so-called science—theories of evolution, the reduction of the universe to atoms and void, arguments against Christianity, cultural pluralism—is part of an attack on Christianity and against theism *per se* that goes back thousands of years before the Age of Science.

The antagonism is not between science and religion, but between Christianity and an anti-Christian scientism that is as contemptuous of evidence as any snake-handling Pentecostalist. Most of us are better off accepting what we were taught as children, except in those rare times when we are challenged by prophets and philosophers who do not ask us to overturn the old laws and ancient faiths but to fulfill their deepest meaning. It is preeminently true of Jesus, who called upon Jews to put aside their legalistic nit-picking and to live out the higher message of their scriptures and traditions.

Traditions need periodic refreshment and reform, but the response of traditionalists to the reformer is all-too often "Crucify him!" This is the problem with Alasdair MacIntyre's approach to tradition, which (as Stephen Clark pointed out) turns into a trap, a dead end, unless there is some truth beyond tradition to which believers can appeal. But to concede that traditions can grow stale and crusty, like the hard skin of an old-fashioned horse-pear that must be broken through to get at the fruit under the surface, is only a backhanded way of acknowledging that traditions are the bearers of truth, even if they must be washed and scraped and pared from time to time. Reformers who reject tradition are not reformers at all, but destroyers.

The greatest of the Reformers was an intense reactionary. The traditions of the Church had become corrupt, Luther argued, and they had to be reformed. Although his latter-day disciples like to think that Luther was restoring the Church of the apostles, neither he nor they could know enough about the primitive Church to be able to construct a wayside chapel, much less to found a denomination. Luther was, after all, an Augustinian, profoundly influenced by the patron saint of his order. It was Augustine who pointed out that, in declaring Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus was not enjoining us to fall in love with the Way—the Scriptures and stories of His life and teachings—to the exclusion of the Truth and the Life.

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In liturgical questions, Luther was conservative. He advocated a German Mass for those who needed it, but he also wanted to retain the Latin Mass as the highest expression of Christian liturgy. He did not do away with altars or clerical vestments, and he expressed resentment that the "devil" in Rome should get all the good music. Over a hundred years after Luther's death, Bach was composing sacred music to Latin texts. Quite apart from the *Magnificat* and the *B-Minor Mass*, his Latin output fills two CDs.

If Luther and Bach were dragged down to the contemporary United States, they would probably run in panic from the make-it-up-as-you-go-along, honky-tonk hootenannies that are put on in so many churches that invoke Luther's name. No, it is not Luther but Luther's nemesis, Zwingli, who stripped the altars, demolished the ancient liturgies, and, anticipating Descartes by 100 years, infected European Christianity with a purely intellectualist rebellion against the traditions of the Church and of Christian civilization.

While Luther was content to accept any practice not positively prohibited in Scripture, Zwingli went to the extreme of rejecting anything that was not prescribed in the Bible. In theory, this attitude leads to the totalitarian dead end of the Amish, but few people have the courage and self-discipline required for the plain life, and in practice Zwingli's scriptural test puts the burden entirely on the frail human intellect. Not "Scripture alone" becomes the rule, but what I can conclude by applying my own reason to Scripture, which means my reason as formed by whoever is in charge of my education. Before too long, we are joining Archbishop Temple in consigning most Christian doctrines to the library basement where dangerous books are hidden from inquiring minds.

Zwingli could not have been so naive as to think that ordinary people would be able, on their own, to make coherent sense out of Scriptures written in Hebrew and Greek and addressed to people living in circumstances almost completely foreign to the Swiss peasants of his day or the American software designers of our own. Considering the ignorance, laziness, and stupidity of most people, most of the time, I might as well turn Quaker and wait for lightning to strike my already addled brain as trust my own intelligence to interpret the Bible.

The arguments are so old and well worn I blush to repeat them: If Scripture is the only authority, then who decides what Scripture is? Do not try to cheat and say "God" or the Bible, because no passage in the Old or New Testament provides a list of authentic Scriptures. In the ancient world, there were arguments pro and con regarding "apostolic" writings such as the first Epistle of Clement and serious opposition to the inclusion of the book of *Revelation*, which is still not included in the lectionary of the Greek Church. In the West, the probably forged *Epistle to the Laodiceans* was not formally excluded until the Council of Florence in the 15th century.

Then who or what did decide to include *Revelation* but not Clement? The simple answer is a series of Church councils, but a more inclusive answer would be that the councils ratified the growing consensus of the apostolic churches. In a word, tradition. No tradition, no Scriptures. Calvin thought that, in some mysterious fashion, an individual Christian could perceive not only the meaning of Scripture but even the authenticity of disputed books. But in introducing two variables—an open canon and freedom of interpretation—into the question of interpretation, Calvin set a task that was inhumanly difficult even for a man of his learning, and the best example of a Christian who exercised his freedom to decide upon the canon he was going to misinterpret is Marcion, the Gnostic heretic who reduced the entire corpus to St. Luke and St. Paul, to whom he gave an antisemitic interpretation.

You may find it convenient to lie to yourself about this for the rest of your life, and in keeping up the pretense that you have escaped from tradition, you are showing an entirely laudable respect for the Zwinglian or Anabaptist traditions in which you were reared or to which you have converted. But for Christians who wish to be honest about what they know, there is no way to bypass the questions of authority and tradition.

Oprah Winfrey asked George W. Bush if he knew anything for certain, and Governor Bush answered that he knew that God exists. But that is exactly what George W. Bush does not know. It is a rationalist cop-out on the same level with his statement that the philosopher he most admires is Jesus Christ. I should like to hear his answer to the tough questions: First, who does he admire most *after* Jesus Christ? And second, on what authority does he know there is a God?

The Oxford Seven concluded that all religions worship the same god. When a similar question was put to C.S. Lewis, he said he agreed but wanted to know which one. It makes a difference whether the one deity is Manitou or Shiva, Astarte or Zeus, Allah or the Christian God. Which is true, which the imperfect imitators? If you take refuge in the answer that all of these gods are tendencies toward a perfect godhead, then yours is probably the god of Newton and Voltaire, the deist projection of Enlightenment intellectuals who were as merciless and uncompassionate toward frail human nature as the windup toy clockmaker they made in their own image. It is they who created the tradition of antitraditionalism.

All healthy societies respect their traditions, not only in religion but in poetry and music, table manners and marriage customs. The laws of Athens that Socrates could not violate by breaking jail (and that he famously defended) were not specific decrees enacted by the Athenian assembly; they were *nomoi*, the customs that had been handed down from one generation to another. Tradition means, quite literally, a giving across from one hand to another, something like the process of one runner handing off the baton to another in a relay race.

Textual scholars speak of manuscript traditions, the readings that have been copied generation after generation by scribes. There are errors, it goes without saying, that are committed and perpetuated in the tradition, but without the tradition there is no text. Scribal fidelity extends to the smallest details. In manuscripts of Greek tragedy, the choral lyric passages are divided into variously shaped short lines called "cola" that were ignored by even the most brilliant scholars on the grounds that there was no consistent tradition, and, even if there were, it would tell us nothing. They were wrong, as it turns out: A consistent tradition is easily constructed out of the slightly varying layouts in different groups of manuscripts, and that tradition goes back, most certainly, to Alexandrian scholars who knew far more of Greek poetry and music than anyone has known since that time. To appreciate the poetic technique of Aeschylus and Sophocles, scholars have to reenter the tradition that they, as heirs of the Enlightenment, have rejected out of hand.

I have spoken of the manuscript tradition in the conventional sense of scribes blindly copying the mistakes of their predecessors while introducing a few of their own, but not all scribes are dunces. Some recognize a superior reading in another

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manuscript; others have been scholars who thought they knew enough grammar and meter to correct faulty texts. The results of these conjectural emendations are not always encouraging. R.D. Dawe, looking back over the 70 years of Aeschylean scholarship that preceded his *Repertory of Conjectures*, concluded: "The quality of conjectures is not such as to encourage the thought that of all nature's miracles, man is the finest."

Nonetheless, the true sense of a textual tradition includes the corrections and improvements made by intelligent scribes and modern Greek and Latin scholars from Demetrius Triclinius to Erasmus to Bentley and Porson and A.E. Housman all the way down to Roger Dawe and E. Christian Kopff.

Repudiate tradition, and you will never make sense either of the text or of the poetic rhythm—nor of anything else under the sun. A few scholars or geniuses will be charmingly eccentric, but in the absence of tradition, most people will simply become servile tools of a cultural establishment that will not allow any challenge to its authority. "When I use a word," said Mr. Humpty Dumpty on a famous occasion, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." When you break down all traditional order, you do not produce freedom and diversity; you produce the University of Wisconsin which, if it cannot find sufficient ethnic variety among the Germans, Finns, and Poles of the Dairy State, will simply fake a publicity photograph to prove its *total* commitment to uniform diversity.

Tradition, because it is a rival source of authority, provides ammunition to those who would challenge an entrenched regime. Destroy tradition, as the barbarians finally succeeded in doing in the late 60's, and you have an army of lost souls "half a million strong," all wearing the same clothes, smoking the same dope, reciting the same passages from *Siddartha*, all trudging the same weary trail "to get back to the Garden." The 60's kids-turned-80's entrepreneurs were not the "me" generation; they were only the "me too" generation.

Now, they are running the country and the world, and whoever was elected in November is one of Them—not lifestyle freaks, but moral and cultural freaks, slaves to an anti-Christian and anti-Western ideology they can never doubt because they cannot read or think or even listen, if some alien from another civilization tries to tell them about the world that once existed long ago but not so far away. They are filled with bright ideas and new paradigms; they use words like "innovation" and "change," "progress" and "liberation," the vocabulary of enslavement that keeps us as stupid and docile as a domesticated animal.

In repudiating tradition, in trying to "be ourselves," we cut ourselves off from the knowledge, so painfully acquired, of the past several thousand years. We do not, of course, make it back to the Garden or even to the Cave. We turn ourselves into one of those people being watched on (or watching) daytime television—the guy having an affair with his wife's brother or the "infantilist" truck driver wearing his Mary Jane outfit. In a hell that is beyond Dante's imagining, a hundred million brain-dead slaves watch each other on television every night and day of the week. That is where Descartes' and Zwingli's cult of the individual has led us—to self-annihilation.

We can be free, but only if we put our wills in service (that is, in subjection) to the traditions that Chesterton called "the democracy of the dead," to the God in knowledge of Whom, as Monsignor Knox was taught to say, "standeth eternal life," and "whose service is perfect freedom."

C

Soul of the River

by Brendan Galvin

Slipping around the bend
of an instant, a shy,
wingéd thing, a spindleshanks
for hanging a body on,
If the soul can be seen

when it takes on the color of river ice
or a wall of reeds, shapes itself
to a cedar, then to a place where bark
sloughed off a gray pine trunk,

and the river's never the same
river twice, but a mirror to the eagle's
passing rumor and the now-and-then
of geese jockeying down the air
to announce opening water,

then the soul is the river's constancy,
and you are the soul of the river,
great blue, always near,
even on this winter morning—a lobe
of southern air pushing in until it's April
or October for a few hours again—

ice on the river going, the last
snow under roadside
bittersweet and chokecherry
like edges of seafoam,
the marsh hawk up and hunting,

heron, and you've been hunting, too,
your wet footprints crossing the road,
three toes and a spur, like a line
of tree runes on the asphalt, until that wind
chopping up the bay arrives to erase them.

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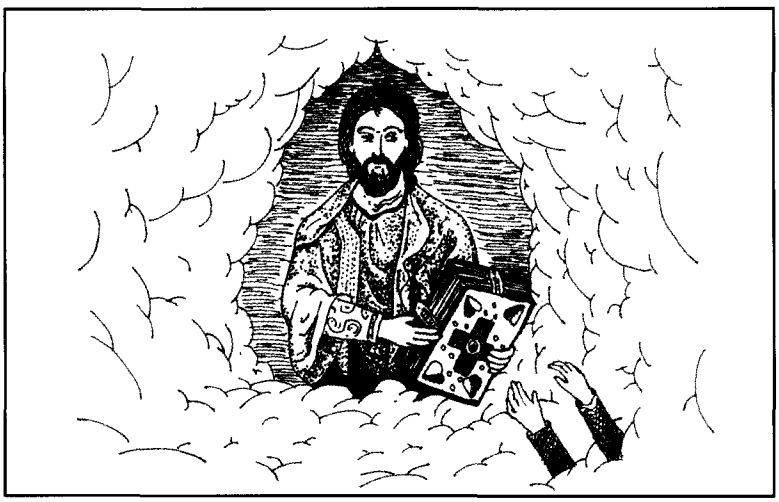
Tradition, Old and New

by Harold O.J. Brown



H. Ward Sterett

"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Matthew 15:3). Jesus had many negative things to say about the dangers of placing excessive emphasis on tradition; in the passage quoted above, he goes on to cite the prophet Isaiah, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Isaiah 29:13). Who said anything positive about tradition? The prophet Jeremiah, for one: "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16). How do we reconcile the warning of Isaiah with the exhortation of Jeremiah?

As a starting point, we must distinguish between tradition as container and tradition as content. This is a difference between the positions of the two great confessional bodies which appear equally devoted to preserving their traditions. Generally speaking, the Eastern Orthodox think of tradition—*paradosis*—literally, the handing down or handing over, as the container that carries the Scripture as its central content. Roman Catholics—and this was the Protestants' *casus belli*—asserted (or seemed to assert) that tradition stands beside Scripture, presenting a content that supplements Scripture and is equally authoritative. For those who had discovered (or recovered) the principles of *sola scriptura*, a natural reaction was to reject the concept of tradition altogether, without reflecting sufficiently on the fact that they themselves retained old traditions to varying degrees and soon developed new ones for their progeny.

If we simply take the word "tradition" without further qualification, Jesus would seem to be saying that all tradition involves transgression. And this, indeed, has been the interpretation of many Protestants, with battle lines drawn up between the camp of those who they think slavishly and uncritically follow whatever has been "*traditum*" (handed down), and who therefore involve themselves in a maze of complex observances, and their own camp, where worship and life are clean and sparse, built only on the Word of God in Scripture. This second camp really does not exist, however, for almost no one attempts to limit teaching and worship to strings of Scripture verses. If we attend a Lutheran or Episcopal service, we see much that reminds us of the Catholic Mass. While repudiating the traditional form of the Mass, even the more austere Reformed and Baptists have their extrabiblical traditions, often taken with extreme seriousness, such as the Sunday evening service and adult Sunday school. No less eminent a Reformer than John Calvin recognized the limits of *sola scriptura* when he warned against limiting theology to collections of Scripture verses strung together.

What then is the Protestant objection to "tradition"? How are we to interpret Jesus' warning? The problem with the traditionalists is not that Scripture is disregarded, but that it is supplemented. It is not merely that something is added on, but that the additions are deemed necessary for salvation. This was the Protestant charge. Nevertheless, the Protestant Reformers, even the stern John Calvin, preserved much more of the Catholic intellectual tradition than many ostensibly Catholic thinkers do today. They preserved it, but, they would argue, as container, not as content.

When the Protestant Reformation—led by Luther, followed by Calvin and the other Reformers—proclaimed the principle of *sola scriptura*, rejecting tradition as a source of revealed truth,

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the Roman Catholic Church entrenched itself behind tradition, to the point that it formally recognized two sources of revelation, Scripture and tradition. Catholics proclaimed this view with zeal in the 16th and succeeding centuries, although they have somewhat toned it down in our ecumenical age.

This understanding of tradition has been the standard Catholic position from the Counter-Reformation Council of Trent up to the present. The Council did not endorse merely that which had become familiar and habitual in Church life and patterns of worship, but argued that its content either was taught orally by Jesus without being recorded in Scripture, or directly inspired by the Holy Spirit in the centuries after the apostles. The Protestant objection to traditions is not to their existence but to the Catholic contention that they are not merely useful or edifying but necessary for salvation. Recent Catholic participants in ecumenical dialogue have sought to modify the apparent sharpness of this position, bringing it closer to the more literal approach of the Eastern Orthodox, who see *paradosis* as including as its most central element the handing down of the Scripture itself, with the other traditions of the Church to be understood primarily as interpretation.

Despite these contemporary tendencies to reinterpret and soften the contention that tradition is a second source alongside of Scripture, the Catholic position at Trent in 1546 seemed plain indeed. The Council, in its fourth session (April 1546, 29 years into the Reformation), stated unequivocally: "[The Synod], following the example of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence all of the books both of the Old and of the New Testament—seeing that one God is the author of both—as well as also the said traditions, as well as those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession."

The reason that the fathers of Trent virtually began their 17 years of labor with a defense of what they considered the second source of divine revelation is easy to discern: By their insistence on the doctrine of *sola scriptura*, the Reformers were threatening the entire fabric of the Roman Church—its structure, its government, its worship, and its theology. From the beginning, the Protestants' attack centered on what they considered the Catholic error of requiring belief in, and observance of, things to be found only in tradition. The problem was not the authority of Scripture, for the Roman Catholics fully accepted that, but rather its adequacy, its sufficiency as a guide for faith and life. By labeling Scripture alone as insufficient, Catholicism requires believers to put their trust in something additional, namely tradition.

The Augsburg Confession (1530), the earliest Protestant confession of faith, is very explicit. It denounces Catholic reliance on traditions as denigrating both grace and faith in such a way as to endanger those who accept them; they were condemned in Article V as "obscuring the doctrine of grace . . . and also the righteousness of faith . . . secondly, these traditions obscured the commandments of God . . . thirdly, they brought great danger to men's consciences."

It is important to recognize that, for the Reformers, the question was not whether the Scripture is authoritative; what was really at stake was its sufficiency. It is impossible to protest against all tradition as such. This becomes evident as soon as one observes the extent to which Protestants also have traditions; the difference is that Protestants do not, or at least *should not*, regard their traditions as necessary additions to biblical teaching.

While the concluding sessions of the Council of Trent were still going on, the Church of England agreed on the 39 Articles as its confession of faith. Article Six makes the point about the sufficiency of Scripture very clearly: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." A similar statement is to be found in the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) almost a century later: "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men." For the Protestants, this is precisely what Catholic tradition does.

Perhaps the most striking illustration in recent times of the Catholic belief in tradition as revelation was the papal declaration of the bodily assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven, promulgated as *de fide*, an article of faith, in 1950. Even the Orthodox, who celebrate the Assumption (which they call the Dormition of Mary), balk at the idea of making it a doctrine that must be believed for salvation.

The choice between Trent, on the Catholic side, and Augsburg or the 39 Articles, on the Protestant one, is not as clean and simple as it might look. It cannot mean Scripture alone, totally without tradition, or Scripture plus tradition, for the simple reason that Protestants have traditions in addition to Scripture itself. The Bible alone does not give enough information to enable Christians to shape all the aspects of their life and worship. If they make the attempt, as the Swiss Reformation (Zwinglian and Calvinist) did, then the products of that attempt soon become traditions in their own right.

Instead of shucking off and paring down traditions attacked as unscriptural, as Luther sought to do, the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation inaugurated at Trent reaffirmed its understanding of traditional Christianity. Certain recognized abuses were purged, but the structure of tradition was retained.

In contrast, the Reformation argued that Catholic traditions were usurpations and deformations, and that the Reformation was the recovery of the true *paradosis*, of the faith once delivered to the saints, obscured by layers of Catholic *paradusis*, encroachments. Nevertheless, there were edifying traditions, beautiful traditions, valuable traditions, both in worship and in theology, and these could and should be preserved. Thus the Anglicans, particularly the High Church movement, and similar developments in Lutheranism created churches and services that outwardly resembled those of the Catholicism of Trent. Even within the Reformed confession that follows Calvin, there is a kind of "high church" movement. When, after the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church abandoned some of its forms, the Protestants who still held on to them looked a bit outdated.

The openness of Luther and his followers to tradition is evident from the way they reformed Catholic worship, confining their changes in the Catholic liturgy to the elimination of accretions that they considered unscriptural, such as the adoration of the Eucharist. Luther insisted that Christ is really present in the bread and wine, but precisely and only for the

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purpose for which he instituted the Supper—for Communion, not adoration. Lutherans preserved or subsequently revived so much Catholic tradition in their liturgical practice that, after the Second Vatican Council, many Lutheran altars look more like traditional Catholic altars than the modified Communion tables the Catholics began to install. Indeed, the willingness of many Lutherans and Anglicans to imitate Catholic liturgical patterns in the effort to preserve continuity with the apostolic tradition has left some feeling rather abandoned as Catholics have done away with them.

While Lutherans and Anglicans often were appreciative or even imitative of many Catholic practices, reformers such as John Calvin and his followers broke more drastically with the past, introducing what is called the "regulative principle." This principle directs that worship involve only those elements that were commanded, or at least attested to, in Scripture. Intended to restore the worship of the early Church, its purpose was the recovery of the oldest and most authentic traditional patterns to the detriment of the "deforming innovations" of medieval Catholicism. In this effort, the Calvinist reforms rather missed the mark, as more recent studies have shown that, from the early centuries, Christian worship exhibited many of the liturgical features that the Calvinists deemed unacceptable innovations.

Some traditions are very long-lived; others quickly fade. To reject all tradition because it is handed down from the past is to cut oneself off from the past. This is an impossibility for any form of Christianity, even more so than for Judaism, for the Christian faith is based on the historical reality of very significant divine interventions: the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. Traditional observances, whether truly religious (such as the Communion liturgy) or more folkloric (such as the Christmas tree), help bond members of the rising generations to the past on which their faith depends. This is one reason that the banning of all traditional Christian symbols from public schools and facilities is socially destructive even in our "pluralistic" secular society: It promotes the severance of children from their cultural past and contributes to the breakdown of—dare we say it—traditional morality. Without tradition, we rapidly lose touch with our ancestors, with our fathers and mothers in faith, and soon with our own parents.

The opposition to tradition in religion once centered on Roman Catholic tradition, but today it extends to all Christianity. It stems from the conviction, often a simple presupposition, that the past is bad, the present better, and the future best of all. From this perspective, all that has been handed down from the past is undesirable and should be dismissed, the Mass in Latin as well as the Christmas tree in schools. Forgotten are those words of Jeremiah cited earlier: "Stand ye in the old ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where in is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." The verse continues with what seems to be the war cry of much of the current society: "But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16).

Tradition is ubiquitous; to deny its existence is foolish, and to abolish it altogether is impossible. Driving through any American suburb on a Sunday morning, you are likely to see church signs proclaiming something like this: Traditional Worship, 9:30 A.M., Contemporary, 11 A.M. "Traditional" is for the old, "contemporary" for the young, or for those who want to be thought young. But what does "contemporary" mean? The present quickly becomes the past, and what was once spontaneous becomes ritual. To make it obligatory is wrong, but to prevent it from appearing is impossible. Thirty-odd years ago, when the charismatic movement began, many of the most liturgically conservative groups (Catholics, Lutherans, and Anglicans among them) burst forth in "enthusiastic worship," with choruses, standing, clapping, and "praise songs" repeated many times. Contemporary services became exciting rather than dull, "the same old thing." The sign of "spiritually alive" Protestant churches became the overhead projector, with choruses projected onto the front wall. Now, not so very many years later, the novel has become traditional: Staid churches include them, sometimes with the rather strange label, "the worship part of the service." *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.* Protestants may well affirm the sufficiency of Scripture for eternal salvation, and as a Protestant I agree, but we cannot do away with the necessity of tradition for life in this world. c

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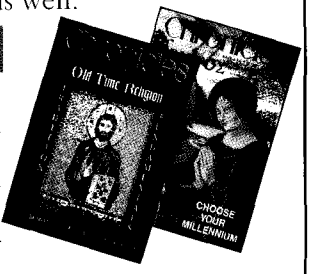

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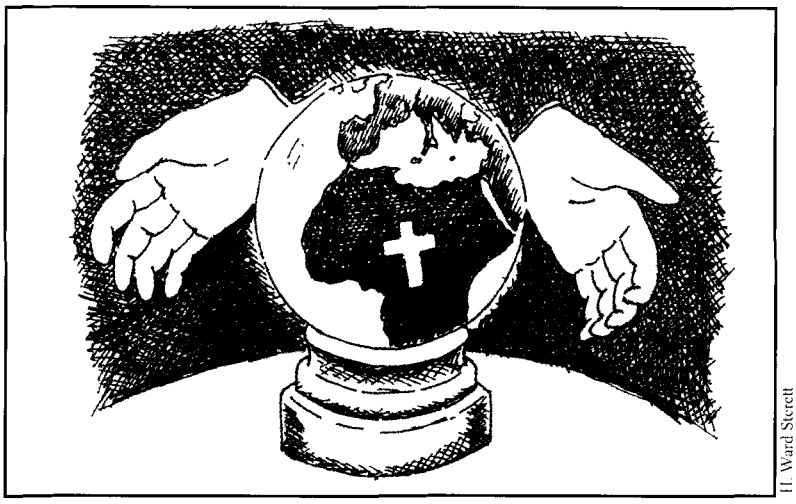
Ethiopia Lifts Her Hands

by Philip Jenkins



H. Ward Sterett

In a classic book of humor entitled *The Experts Speak*, we find an impressive collection of failed prophecies and wildly inaccurate predictions: Television would never catch on, nobody needs a personal computer, and so on. I occasionally think there might be a place for a parallel volume of religious forecasts gone stunningly wrong. Such an assemblage of errors would include Thomas Jefferson's belief that America's future was undoubtedly Unitarian and Mark Twain's prediction that, by around 2000, Christian Science would be challenging Roman Catholicism for supremacy in the Christian world. The 1960's produced a singularly rich crop of predictions insisting that liberation theology and theological radicalism would carry the field long before the end of the century. Foretelling the future shape of religion requires, well, a prophet, which most of us are not. All of which is by way of apology for the fact that I intend to engage in exactly the kind of activity that I have disparaged. It would take a fool to try to foretell the religious loyalties of the coming century; I am that fool.

My foolishness, at least, has a strong statistical grounding, based on what today seem like undeniable demographic and religious trends. If these developments unfold as predicted, then the world's religious picture by around 2050 is going to have many features that would delight a modern-day conservative: Christianity will be flourishing, expanding rapidly both in absolute and relative numbers, and religious thought and belief will be highly conservative and traditional. The problem—and some will see it as a problem—is that the traditions in question will not be those of Europe, North America, or the global North: in short, of anything that we currently think of as "traditional Christian culture." Christianity may be entering one of the most glorious ages in its history, but this age is one with which we Northerners will have precious little connection.

When I tell people that I am researching future trends in world religions, they often ask, "So, will Christianity (*or* the Roman Catholic Church) survive?" They seem stunned when I tell them that both should be expanding apace through the coming century, and that nothing short of a global cataclysm can prevent this. Barring an encounter with an asteroid that has our planet's name on it, the number of Christians worldwide should soar, because the faith is so strong in those regions that are growing at an astounding rate. Moreover, the Christian share of the population in these countries is expanding due to evangelistic efforts that are succeeding to a degree scarcely paralleled in church history. Currently, for instance, about 40 percent of Nigeria's 120 million people are Christian. If the churches can simply maintain that share, then there will be over 120 million Nigerian Christians by 2050. Most observers, however, think that this is a pessimistic scenario and that the proportion of Christians in that country will be even larger by mid-century.

Looking around the world, we can find many similar cases, and we can make a plausible estimate of the countries that should, by the middle of the 21st century, have the largest number of Christians. The list will startle many. The United States should still head the list, with over 300 million members of Christian denominations, but after that, the emphasis shifts dramatically to the global South. The next names on the list, each with between 100 and 200 million believers, would be Brazil, Mexico, the Philippines, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). Trailing these, with 60 to 80 million Christians, are Ethiopia, Russia, China, and—would you believe it!—actually a Western European country, Germany. Don't worry though; this anomaly will soon be corrected: In all probability, Germany will shortly after be overtaken by another African country.

Looking at the top ten Christian nations slightly distorts the overall picture, because it understates the growing African domination of the churches. Quite apart from giant nations such as Nigeria, Christian numbers are expanding across the continent.

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And while Africa and Latin America grow, European populations will contract steadily: The fifteen nations of the European Union combined will shrink by about a sixth over the next 50 years. Some countries, such as Italy and Spain, will be losing people so fast as to raise doubts about their continued existence as organized societies. Even in terms of formal adherence to Christianity, sub-Saharan Africa will already have displaced Europe as the Christian heartland within a quarter century or so, while the divergence in terms of practice will be even more glaring. By 2050, non-Hispanic whites may make up only one-seventh of Christians worldwide.

The nation of Uganda is representative of the fast-growing tropical countries, particularly in Africa. Uganda's population in 1950 was a mere 5.5 million people (in a land the size of Oregon), but the number of people has doubled every 25 years or so, the same rate of growth as North America experienced during the expansion of the colonial and early national period. There were 11 million Ugandans by 1975; today, there are 23 million. According to U.N. statistics, the total should grow to 65 million by 2050. The U.S. Census Bureau offers an even more remarkable projection: 84 million Ugandans by the mid-21st century. The rate of overall growth would be even higher if not for the effects of AIDS and civil violence.

In religious terms, Uganda represents one of the triumphs of the missionary movement. Although Christian activities date back only to the 1870's, the successes have been astonishing: Today, about one third of the population is Protestant, one-third Catholic, and one-sixth Muslim, while the rest follow traditional African religions. Even if we assume no further expansion through conversion, the Ugandan Christian population should still grow from around 17 million today to over 40 million by mid-century. Assuming continuing evangelistic success, at least 50 million Ugandan Christians is probable. At that point, there will be more self-described Christians in Uganda than in Britain, France, or Italy. As this example indicates, we are living through an age of religious revolution.

As the saying goes, you can prove anything with statistics, even the truth. Much more significant than the raw numbers is what they imply for the practice and theology of the faith: Put simply, the booming African churches will diverge ever further from European patterns. This is not just a matter, say, of African Anglican or Catholic churches keeping the same basic liturgy and religious beliefs, but adding a little drumming and putting up pictures of a dark-skinned Christ. To understand the scale of what we might be dealing with, just think of how Christianity changed when it was assimilated into the German cultures of Europe in the Middle Ages. Yes, Jesus was imagined differently, becoming the blond, blue-eyed figure we have been portraying ever since; but over the centuries, the cultural interaction also resulted in a wholesale revision of older Christian thought and belief.

I have already ventured too far into the prophecy business to try to imagine the shape of the new Christianities, of what we might call the "Next Christendom" that is now in gestation. Yet we can already see how Christians in the Southern hemisphere are adapting the faith to their cultural realities and distinctive traditions. All too often, Americans and Europeans assume that Christianity is a purely Western export, a toxic package of prejudices and repressions that has been imposed on unwilling native populations in Africa or Asia as part of the colonial enterprise. In Barbara Kingsolver's snide novel, *The Poisonwood Bible*, a missionary girl in the Belgian Congo recollects that "We came from Bethlehem, Georgia, bearing Betty Crocker cake mixes into the jungle." Kingsolver is depicting Christianity as a part of white-bread Euro-American culture which has no place overseas; only imperialistic arrogance leads us to believe otherwise. In truth, Christianity has been in Africa for a very long time and was domesticated there long before it ever tamed backward tribes such as the Germans and English.

To appreciate the Africanness of Christianity, we might look at the truly ancient Ethiopian Church. An Ethiopian court official is one of the first Gentile converts identified in the Acts of the Apostles, and the entire nation was converted around the same time that the Roman Empire was. Although scarcely known by Westerners, this church offers one of the most remarkable success stories in Christianity. The church has many aspects that would surprise a Westerner, including some practices that derive from Judaism: Most believers practice circumcision, some keep a Saturday Sabbath, and many churches feature an ark. But it would be a daring outsider who would suggest that the faith for which Ethiopians have struggled and died over 1,600 years is anything less than a manifestation of the Christian tradition. Even today, after conflicts with Muslims and, more recently, anticlerical Marxists, the church claims 30 million members, which is more than the number of North American Methodists of all denominations combined. The population of Ethiopia is expected to triple in the next 50 years, and it is reasonable to expect that the number of Ethiopian Christians will grow accordingly.

Although there is no direct link between the Ethiopian Church and the newer congregations of black Africa, the black churches often lay claim to the Ethiopian name as a kind of declaration of independence from European models. African churches of all stripes are fond of quoting Psalm 68, which proclaims, "Let Ethiopia hasten to stretch out her hands to God." For over a hundred years, autonomous "Ethiopian" or "Zion" churches have been expanding across Africa. Today, around one sixth of all Christians worldwide belong to churches that are neither Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, nor Orthodox, and many of these are found among the African independent churches. That is already over 350 million believers, and the number is expected to climb in coming decades.

These independents flourish because they offer believers a brand of Christianity that accepts many older rituals and cultural patterns of the kind that the missionaries once denounced as pagan. Often, too, newer churches practice a very enthusiastic religion, one that fully accepts the value of dreams, visions, prophecies, divine revelations, and spiritual healings. It is easy for Westerners to see such behaviors or rituals as beyond the legitimate bounds of Christianity, but in many critical ways, the independent congregations lie firmly within the great tradition. The creeds of the different churches are classic and powerful statements of Christian doctrine.

In many ways, the Christian texts and creeds make far more sense for the independent churches than they do in the West, precisely because they are so rooted in traditional cultures, which can be seen as an ideal *preparatio evangelica*. Western churches might assert a formal belief in the communion of saints and imagine the supernatural church as a union of living believers with the souls of those who have already died. For African Christians, the notion of continuity with the world of their ancestors is not only credible, it was a fundamental component of popular beliefs long before the acceptance of Chris-

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tian doctrine. And while many Western Christians find it difficult to accept notions of the afterlife or resurrection as literally true, these theories resonate with African independent churches. The fact that believers regularly see their ancestors in dreams and visions is simply proof that they are still alive in God. In the affairs of this world, too, the ideal of Christian community may be more accessible in southern Africa than in Western Europe. For African churches, proximity to native traditions gives a powerful relevance to corporate and communal visions of the Church, the *ecclesia*.

To understand what may seem like the oddities of the independent churches, it is helpful to read the best contemporary account of first-century Christianity: the Acts of the Apostles. Passages that seem mildly embarrassing to a Western audience read differently—and relevantly—in the new churches of Africa or Latin America, where believers take a more matter-of-fact attitude toward the apostolic world of signs and wonders. Of course a holy man like Philip might have four virgin daughters who prophesied: What is prophecy but a sign of the true church? And why should modern readers have difficulty in accepting the repeated miracles, healings, and raisings from the dead undertaken by the apostles? Simply read the gospels: This is exactly what Jesus promised his disciples, without any caveat that these powers might expire with the end of the first century. Then, as now, God spoke to his followers by means of dreams and inspired prophecies. Yes, there are still people in the world who believe in miracles, and their numbers are growing—quite rapidly, in fact.

We can disagree at length in deciding what is fundamental to Christianity and what is simply the expression of a particular culture. This point was brought home to me some years ago when I visited St. Peter's Anglican cathedral in the Australian city of Adelaide, where the visitor leaves the bright sunshine to enter into a dark Gothic chamber, which seems utterly inappropriate for the local climate and environment. However, the English Victorian builders believed that a "religious" building had to follow certain cultural norms, and that meant copying the Gothic styles which mimicked the brooding forests of medieval northern Europe. Some enthusiasts even insisted on calling Gothic architecture "Christian," *tout court*. Presumably, if the course of Christian history had run differently, then another society might have succeeded in spreading its distinctive cultural vision across the world, with equal confidence that it was the only fit vessel for conveying Christian truth.

While it is easy to recognize that Gothic architecture represents a particular cultural form, we need to be more flexible to determine which other cherished ideas and images are cultural accidents, as opposed to essentials of faith. In the coming century, this debate is likely to rage with continuing fury as the new churches acclimatize ever more enthusiastically to their societies, to the horror of established Western denominations. Perhaps these debates will contribute to more North-South schisms, and even mutual denunciation as extreme as the ancient split between Catholic and Orthodox. But if such controversies do develop, the shifting population balance is so marked that the future of Christianity will be in the global south, and the successful churches of the future will be those that best accommodate to those cultures and traditions. Everything augurs wonderfully well for "traditional" Christianity; sadly, they just won't be my traditions.

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The Silent Revolution and the Making of Victorian England

Herbert Schlossberg

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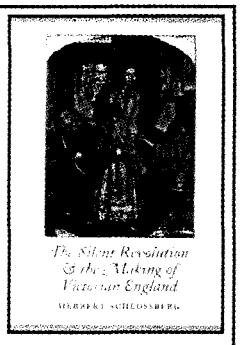

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Calvinism and Culture

by Steven Wilkins

H. Ward Sterett

Historian Christopher Dawson writes that "It is clear that a common way of life involves a common view of life, common standards of behavior, and common standards of value, and consequently a culture is a spiritual community which owes its unity to common beliefs and common ways of thought far more than to any unanimity of physical type . . . Therefore from the beginning the social way of life which is culture has been deliberately ordered and directed in accordance with the higher laws of life which are religion."

The most important element in the formation of a culture is the predominant faith of its people. The foundation of Western culture is Christianity; in this country, Reformed Protestant Christianity. The majority of the early settlers were serious Christians; most of them were followers of John Calvin. Sydney Ahlstrom has noted that "Puritanism provided the moral and religious background of fully 75% of the people who declared their independence in 1776." Ahlstrom further argues that, when the influence of the Reformation is considered among European immigrants, the figure is closer to 85 or 90 percent. This was true not only of the Puritans and Separatists of New England but of those inhabitants of the Southern colonies who came from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Huguenot France. In short, Calvinism was the dominant theological position of the American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn—no Protestant—sums up the case:

> If we call the American statesmen of the late eighteenth century the Founding Fathers of the United States, then the Pilgrims and Puritans were the grandfathers and Calvin the great-grandfather. In saying this, one need not exclude the Virginians because Anglicanism has essentially Calvinistic foundations still recognizable in the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Pilgrim Fathers, like the Puritans generally, represented a kind of re-reformed Anglicanism. Though the fashionable eighteenth century Deism may have pervaded some intellectual circles, the prevailing spirit of Americans before and after the War of Independence was essentially Calvinistic . . .

All of this changed, however, in the 19th century. New England turned away from historic Christianity to embrace the heresies of Deism, Unitarianism, and Transcendentalism. This apostasy, coupled with the influence of the aberrant—actually, heretical—theology of Charles Finney in the West, drove the majority in the North away from biblical Calvinism. The doctrines of God's sovereignty and man's depravity were discarded. Men were left with an irrelevant God (or none at all) and a sovereign, perfectible man. Harriet Beecher Stowe observed that, in Boston during the mid-19th century, "the only thing worse than an atheist was a Calvinist."

The biblical teaching of human depravity offended modern Northern sensibilities. Man was basically good. "Sin" was merely the consequence of inadequate education and an unseemly environment: Man's problem was not *inside* of him but something *external* to him, in society. There was no need for rebirth in the biblical sense: Man was not saved by grace but by education and sociopolitical reform. As a result, the North became "movement mad" with societies dedicated to the eradication of every evil under the sun (real or imagined).

The South observed this drift into semipaganism with a mixture of fear and amazement; while the North was experiencing a general apostasy, the South was undergoing a revival of the old

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faith. As the North increasingly drifted from the Bible, the South was becoming the "Bible Belt."

As the 19th century began, the South was one of the most "unchurched" regions of the country. By the 1830's, however, it had become a hotbed of evangelicalism. Historians have called this revival the "Second Great Awakening." Most of the attention has focused on the Northern side of this "Awakening," partly because it is far more interesting than what occurred in the South. In the North (and in some sections of the upper South), the Awakening was dominated by heterodoxy, fanaticism, and extravagant emotionalism. The Awakening had all the hallmarks of bedlam, complete with weeping, wailing, and the gnashing of teeth. The Awakening in the South, however, had a decidedly different character.

Charles Finney's brand of revivalism, which swept the North like wildfire, never resonated in the South. The Southern Christian leaders (Daniel Baker, J.H. Thornwell, B.M. Palmer, R.L. Dabney, John Holt Rice, Thomas Peck, and Moses Drury Hoge, among others) vigorously opposed Finney's theology as well as his "innovations," preventing the South from being corrupted by the fanaticism that dominated the revival in the North and West. Following the classic "Reformed faith," these men believed that true revivals were God-sent, not man-produced, as Finney and his followers insisted. Revivals could not be planned, nor could they be prolonged by artificial means. They were a gift of God.

The attempt to contrast these views is not mere theological nit-picking. Finney's revivalism focused on man's ability to manipulate God and thus produce reform by his own efforts. Southern Christians, however, insisted that man was utterly dependent upon God and that nothing could be accomplished apart from His blessing. These two perspectives would bear different fruit: Dependence upon God and strict adherence to His will, as set forth in His Word, became the hallmark of Southern Christianity; political coercion in the name of God increasingly characterized Northern Christianity.

The predominant view in the South was that the Bible is the infallible, inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God. The content of the sermons was overwhelmingly biblical. Southern ministers spent their energies on explaining and applying the truths of the Scriptures: the sovereignty of God, the depravity of man, the divine election of grace, the atoning death of Christ, the call to repentance and justification by faith.

Thus, in the South, the preaching of the Word was viewed as the chief means God uses to change the hearts of men. The primary instruments of reform, therefore, were not political or social movements but the truths of God faithfully proclaimed to the consciences of men. Reform always begins within man by the grace of God, not from without by legislative coercion or military force.

In accordance with the old orthodoxy, Christian Southerners believed that God was sovereign: He alone can be trusted with unlimited authority since He is spotlessly holy, just, and good. They believed, therefore, that, if society was to prosper, all human institutions (family, church, and state) must abide within the strict limits that God had outlined for each in the Bible.

It is only within God Himself that we find the solution to the ancient question of the one and the many: God is both One and Three; both unity and diversity reside equally in Him. Christian cultures, reflecting this truth, have always had a place for both "oneness" (unity, structure, form) and "manyness" (individualism and diversity). Only in the Triune God and in His Covenant can we have unity that does not annihilate legitimate

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diversity, and *vice versa*.

Consequently, Southern men understood the importance of minding their own business. The officious, busybody attitude of New England was not tolerated. Following Scripture, men cared for their neighbors, but they knew there were certain things that are none of your concern, and you need to resist the temptation to run other people's lives.

By contrast, unitarian and atheistic cultures usually demand a stifling egalitarian conformity in order to preserve unity. Unitarians view God not as a Person, but as an impersonal force. There can be no "love" in God (since His monism makes it impossible to express love within Himself); and the culture, reflecting this vision of God, often becomes cruel and heartless. Societies that refuse to recognize the loving Trinity seek unity by force, either through totalitarianism or statist egalitarianism; thus, they tend to be characterized by harshness, bitterness, and cruelty (as Islamic and communistic societies have been). True unity, however, is founded not upon impersonal or bureaucratic forces but upon the love and grace (the personableness) of the Triune God. Where this is lacking, there can never be true freedom, peace, or prosperity.

The theology of the South molded the political views that have dominated the region. The concepts of limited constitutional government, a union composed of free and independent states, a hearty distrust of democracy, strict constructionism, the separation of powers, and the rule of law: All of these doctrines (and many more), which characterized our nation in its founding, are rooted in biblical Christianity. At one time, these views prevailed throughout the country, but the North's theological liberalism gradually undermined these convictions among the "progressives" of the mid-19th century.

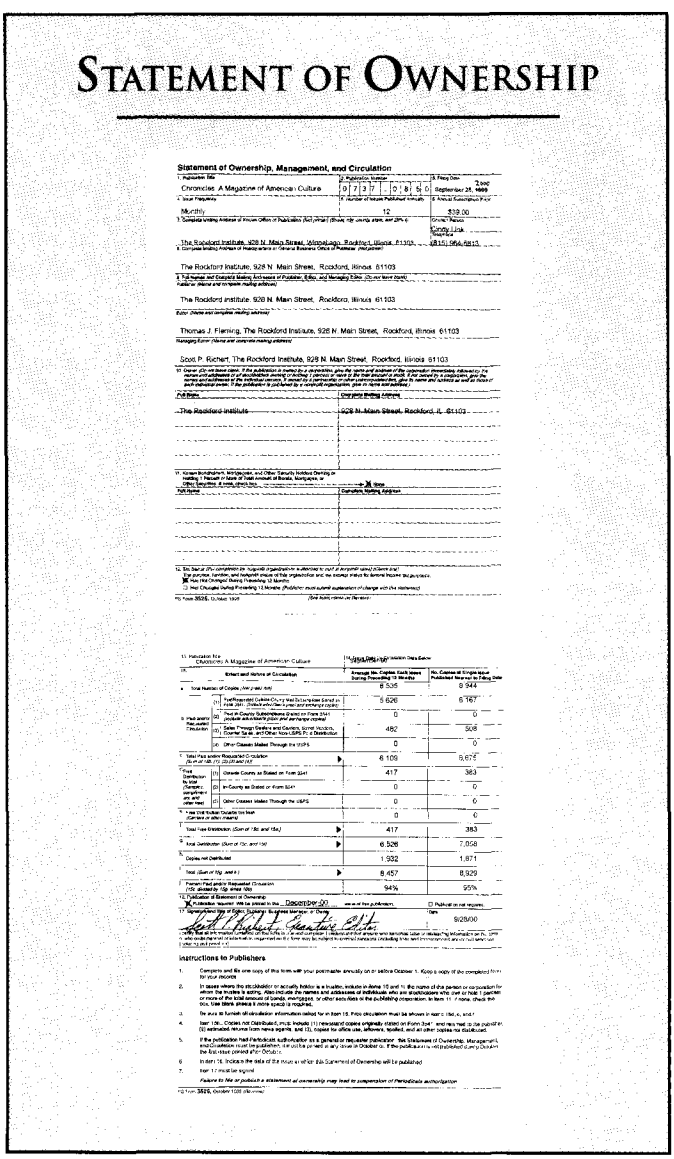
By 1861, the descendants of the Puritans in New England had rejected the religious faith that had laid the foundation for the nation. As one historian has put it, New England had been transformed from the "Holy Commonwealth" into "Yankeeland." The rejection of the Reformed faith led to a perversion of the old faith of their fathers. The Puritan "work ethic" degenerated into a greedy materialism; the Puritan emphasis upon education became a worship of knowledge centered on man; the old concern that men obey God's Word metamorphosed into an overreaching pharisaism; the exercise of godly authority turned into tyrannical, statist authoritarianism; and the desire to take dominion over Creation became a yearning to use political power to enforce conformity.

The great commission that Christ gave His disciples—to preach the Gospel and see the world transformed by grace—was perverted into a secular "Manifest Destiny" to make the world over in the image of New England—by force, if necessary. The South was the first major target of this "evangelical statism," and we lost far more at Appomattox than a war: We lost a world, a way of life. Moreover, the entire nation lost the constitutional republic our forefathers had sacrificed to establish; in its place we gained an unrestrained, amoral empire that, like Babylon of old, seeks to save the world by legislative coercion and brute force. Appomattox was a terrible defeat not just for the South, but for all who care about constitutional government and liberty.

We must take seriously the connection between theology and culture. We have been deluded into believing that we can enjoy the fruits of Christendom without affirming its roots; that we can have a society of integrity without faith in a God Who holds all men accountable to speak the truth. We assume we can have prosperity and ignore marriage vows. We think we can rear a moral, responsible generation while teaching our young to ignore morality and shirk responsibility. We are shocked that our children are callously indifferent to violence and cruelty, yet we insist that they be taught that all life is merely the result of a grand cosmic accident. We are living in a deadly dream world; the cost of rejecting biblical theology has been catastrophic.

When we break covenant with God, Andrew Lytle said, all we are left with is magic. But magic is nothing more than pretense: We have no power to perform miracles, and this impotency provokes in unbelievers a lust for power. If there is no God, we must create our own. Having forsaken the true God, modern man has embraced the idol of empire. Those who rule us are unable to think of any solutions except those that come from their god, the unitary state. But idols cannot work miracles. Every effort to attain "freedom and dignity" by political means results only in more slavery and degradation.

Apostates always seek liberty apart from grace. As we used to know, however, liberty is a gift from God. He who commits sin, our Savior said, is a slave to sin. "But, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:34, 36). This is a lesson our forefathers knew well. It is a lesson we must learn again. c



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Reactionary Radicals

RADICAL REACTIONARIES

A Politically Incorrect Beatification

The Saga of Pope Pius IX

by Alberto Carosa

Few people have been so hated that their enemies have disrupted their funeral processions in an attempt to throw their coffins into a river, but that is precisely what happened to Pope Pius IX on the night of July 12, 1881.

Amid the heated debate surrounding Pio Nono's beatification this past September 3, a few articles mentioned this episode. But with the notable exception of *Inside the Vatican* (March 2000), no one indicated that this attempt was not an isolated attack during an otherwise peaceful two-hour march from the Vatican, where Pius IX had been temporarily buried after his death, to the Basilica of San Lorenzo Outside the Walls, which the Pope had chosen as his final burial place. Indeed, it was only one of the highlights of an incredibly stormy procession, which turned into a real road to Calvary for the immense crowd of Roman faithful determined to pay a final tribute to their beloved Pope. The funeral cortege had to make its way through horrible blasphemies, insults, curses, obscene songs, stone-throwing, and clubbings. Many mourners were seriously injured.

The attacks were carried out by a few hundred freemasons and liberals with the virtual connivance of the police force, who showed no respect whatsoever for the Catholic faithful and their sentiments. Rome had been "liberated" from the Pope's temporal authority 11 years earlier, and the police were serving a prime minister, Agostino Depretis, who was known for his hostility toward Catholics.

Almost 120 years later, the harassment continues. The spiritual heirs of the anti-Christian hecklers may resort to more sophisticated tools, including the media, but their intention is the same: to disparage the figure who, more forcefully than anyone else, denounced their errors, which are the root cause of the profound crisis in contemporary society. Pius IX repeatedly and forcefully condemned socialism and communism beginning in 1846, two years before Marx and Engels published the *Communist Manifesto*. Had his appeals been heeded, mankind would have been spared the mass murder of tens of millions of people during the 20th century.

Msgr. Carlo Liberati, an official at the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints, argued in *Corriere della Sera* (July 13) that the major American media are in the forefront of this smear campaign, particularly the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. While these newspapers have alleged that Pius IX was antisemitic, Msgr. Liberati claims that the contrary is true: Pius IX promoted true freedom for Rome's Jews. The gates of Rome's Jewish ghetto were pulled down under his instructions, and Pius deployed patrols in the area to protect the Jews from those in the Roman populace who were upset by their emancipation.

The American media made much of the case of Edgardo Levi-Mortara, a Jew from Bologna who, when he was 17 months old, was secretly baptized by his Catholic nanny because he seemed about to die. Mortara survived, but his parents, when informed of his baptism, refused to bring him up in the Catholic faith. In accordance with canon law, on June 24, 1858, the child (then six years old) was brought to Rome, where he was educated under the personal protection of the Pope. Eight days later, his parents arrived in Rome, where they stayed for a month and pled for his return. Although he met with his family on a daily basis, Mortara never showed the slightest desire to rejoin them, as he himself later attested. In his teens, Mortara returned for a month to his parents, but he ultimately decided to settle in Rome and become a Catholic priest. He was one of the first witnesses to give testimony in favor of Pius IX's beatification.

When Piedmontese troops entered Rome in 1870, they hurried to the convent where they thought the 19-year-old Mortara was being held captive. To their surprise, he not only categorically refused to be "liberated" but made it clear that he had decided to take religious vows and to join the Lateran Canon Regulars. While churches and monasteries in Rome were being turned into stables, prisons, and army barracks by the very "liberals" who had come to "free" and "protect" Edgardo Mortara, he wanted to become a priest. In the end, he chose to expatriate rather than to serve the Pope's enemies. He became a well-known itinerant preacher, able to deliver sermons in nine different languages.

Why "was such a scandal raised for one child," Msgr. Liberati asked the *Washington Post*, "when thousands of Polish children were deported to Russia [in the same period] and forced to become Orthodox, and nobody protested?" Forced conversions are still the order of the day in Muslim-dominated areas; unlike Christians who are unwillingly inducted into Islam, however, Edgardo Mortara could have returned to his family's faith, had he wanted to, without fearing for his life.

Canon law has always condemned forced conversion and baptism against the will of a child's parents. Popes imprisoned Christians who violated this canon; and in the Papal States, a fine of 1,000 gold ducats (a huge sum) was imposed on anyone found by the courts to have done so. Jewish families in the Pa-

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Alberto Carosa, the editor of Famiglia Domani Flash, *writes from Rome.*

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pal States were not allowed to employ Christian servants, not on antisemitic grounds but precisely to avoid the types of problems raised by the Mortara case. For Pius IX to endure what he did for the sake of one child, knowing the international storm he would unleash, he must have had a compelling reason. To put it bluntly, he was either insane or a saint.

In his recent book *Pio IX* (Piemme), Prof. Roberto de Mattei (who holds the chair of modern history at the University of Cassino and is the president of Centro Culturale Lepanto, a Rome-based organization of lay Catholics) finally sets the record straight. Pius's beatification, de Mattei believes, presents a perfect opportunity to revisit the history of his pontificate. Moreover, his beatification vindicates his memory, proving him right and his detractors wrong.

Pius IX decried the evils of his time as the seeds that would eventually grow into what Pope John Paul II calls the "culture of death." Divorce, abortion, and euthanasia are the visible results of the sweeping de-Christianization that Pius IX steadfastly fought throughout his pontificate. This same secularization gave rise to the totalitarianisms of the 20th century, with their genocides, gulags, and concentration camps. While Pius IX may have lost the initial battle, his vision may, in the long run, help win the war by providing guidance for a future restoration of the principles and institutions of Christian civilization.

De Mattei's biography of Pius IX, combining the rigorous approach of the professional historian with clear and forceful language, is suitable both for the expert and the layman. It also helps to correct the impression left by Fr. Giacomo Martina, a Jesuit who composed a three-volume biography of Pius IX, only to end up opposing his beatification.

While the tribulations that characterized Pio Nono's pontificate are well known, the theological and moral implications of his teachings are not. As de Mattei points out in his introduction, Pius IX's vision of history and society was profoundly counterrevolutionary. He viewed the Renaissance, Protestantism, the French Revolution, and the *Risorgimento* (the Masonic-inspired movement that led to the unification of Italy) as different stages of a century-long revolution that was attempting to replace Christian civilization with an anarchical and egalitarian universal republic.

Inspired by St. Augustine, Pius IX viewed contemporary events through a "theology of history" that saw human life in terms of two cities destined to fight each other until the end of time: the "*Civitas Dei*," namely, the Catholic Church; and the "*Civitas Diaboli*," represented in his day by the European and Italian revolutionaries. But Pius IX did not limit his vision to opposing contemporary evils: He presented the papacy as the only force able to defeat the forces of anti-Christian revolution and pave the way for the revival of an authentic Christian civilization.

Pius's tenure as Pope coincided with the height of the clash between the Catholic Church and the modern civilization that arose during the French Revolution. The strife erupted in unprecedented virulence during the first three years of his pontificate, forcing him to choose between the principles he incarnated and the new ideas with which he initially sympathized. In fact, he started his pontificate by granting amnesty to political prisoners and promoting reforms, but he soon backtracked when he realized that his moves, far from appeasing the radical nationalists, actually helped them to pursue an increasingly bold agenda, which included insurrections and assassinations.

Scott P. Richert

A statue of Blessed Pope Pius IX in front of St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

Following the revolutionary upheavals of 1848, Pius IX realized that no reconciliation was possible between the divine Church, founded by Jesus Christ and entrusted with the mission to announce His Gospel, and those revolutionary forces hell-bent on undermining this mission under the pretext of the *Risorgimento*, which was tantamount to an anti-Gospel based on a denial of natural and Christian law. Once Pius became fully aware of what was at stake, he devoted himself to opposing and reversing the revolution with the full might of his pontificate.

In the leftist newspaper *Il Manifesto* (June 30), Father Martina, the Jesuit biographer of Pius IX, claimed that his opposition to Pio Nono's beatification was motivated by a belief that the Pope would not enjoy a sufficient degree of popular devotion. Yet a thousand faithful from around the world flocked to the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Lucina on September 2, the eve of the beatification ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica, for a solemn pontifical Mass in honor of Pius IX, which featured plainchant sung by the Cappella Musicale Choir of St. Peter's. After the Mass, in a nearby square, a military band played national and popular anthems of Italy's states from before the *Risorgimento*. By comparison, an anticlericalist demonstration, protesting the

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beatification of Pius IX and what the organizers fear may be the beginning of a Catholic revival, did not draw more than 50 people. A similar demonstration on September 20 drew a larger crowd: About 100 people rallied to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the breach of Porta Pia, the hole in the city's walls through which the Piedmontese troops stormed the city, completing Italy's unification in 1870.

The attacks on historic Catholic leaders, as Roberto de Mattei notes, are ultimately aimed at the Church Herself. As Alfons Cardinal Stickler wrote in the preface to another of de Mattei's books, *The Crusader of the 20th Century* (a biography of Tradition, Family, and Property founder Plinio Correa de Oliveira), "[T]he true object of these accusations and falsehoods is the Church and . . . they are made to deny the Church's role as the 'teacher of truth,' recently affirmed by the Holy Father John Paul II in *Veritatis Splendor*."

The same John Paul II, through his secretary of state, Angelo Cardinal Sodano, publicly commended Professor de Mattei's biography of Pius IX with the following message, which was read during the official presentation of the book in early September:

> On the occasion of the presentation of the volume *Pio IX* by Professor Roberto de Mattei, the Holy Father extends his goodwill greetings with the hope that the historical investigation will be instrumental in promoting a better knowledge of the life and deeds of his illustrious predecessor. Wishing the cultural event a fruitful outcome, he imparts the author of the book, the speakers, and the attendees his apostolic blessing.

A conference held in conjunction with the official presentation debunked other myths surrounding Pius IX. Pio Nono did not reject modernization *per se*, but modernity as a process of secularization, antithetical to tradition. The ideological tenets of the *Risorgimento*, he believed, would destroy traditional society and Christianity. While Pius IX is often described as "anti-Italian," he was not against Italian unification in itself: He did, however, oppose the *Risorgimento* once he realized that the movement was becoming increasingly anti-Christian.

Many historians view Pius IX as a saint in his personal life, while claiming that he was politically naive. But de Mattei, who does not conceal his sympathy and admiration for Pius IX, argues that the Pope cannot be deconstructed: His religious approach cannot be separated from his policies; his private life is inextricably bound up with his public life. By splitting his personality, the detractors of Pius IX (as well as some of his defenders) attempt to revive the tired proposition of liberalism that separates the personal dimensions of human life from the public dimension, man from society, and morals from politics. The most serious political evils, however, have their origin in the pretense that politics is independent of morals. Pius IX held the opposite view, which is both classical and Christian: Politics is a category of morality, to which it must be strictly subordinated if it is to be ordered to the common good.

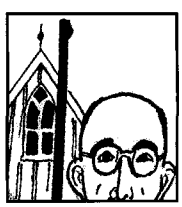
The proper relationship between society and the individual, Church and state, and politics and morality was the central concern of Pio Nono's pontificate. The roots of this problem date as far back as Renaissance Italy, when Machiavelli emancipated politics from morality, turning it into a mere tool in the pursuit of power. From that time on, the "*raison d'état*" has been the supreme yardstick for governmental action. Count Benso of Cavour, who believed that any means, however immoral, were justified if they served the cause of national unification, most fully incarnated this Machiavellian understanding of politics. As such, the Piedmontese count, as Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci noted in *Note sul Machiavelli*, is not only the heir of Machiavelli but the real "Italian Jacobin," the authentic forerunner of those 20th-century "professional revolutionaries" who have subordinated morality to politics, following the well-known formula of Lenin. Since the time of the *Risorgimento*, Italian culture, in the name of personal and national autonomy from morals, has aggressively pursued secularization, which Gramsci described as the "complete de-christianization of all life and customary relationships" and the "absolute mundanization and earthly connotation of thought, an absolute humanism of history."

To combat the cultural vision that came to dominate Italy after its unification, Pius IX presented a "religious option," which constitutes the interpretative key of his pontificate. He strenuously opposed the secularization of society, which denied any action of God in the affairs of mankind. Instead, he aggressively championed a political philosophy that—following Aquinas, Dante, and Vico—regarded politics and morality, as well as the temporal and spiritual orders, as distinct but not separate realities, and he sought a balance between the two spheres. More than the loss of the Papal States, Pius wrote to King Pedros V of Portugal on October 22, 1862, "What afflicts my heart is this turnaround of principles, this planned loss of moral sense and rightful guidance." He viewed temporal power as a means ordered to the supreme, supernatural ends of the Church, which is the true master of faith and morals in the civil and social, as well as religious, spheres.

> Despite his beatification, Pius IX remains largely unappreciated.

Despite his beatification, Pius IX remains largely unappreciated. His every public act—religious, political, and social—stemmed from his profound interior life and can only be understood in the context of his Christian anthropology and theology of history. Pius IX viewed the divine will as the supreme rule of human behavior, and he was adamantly convinced that God guides not only the life of individuals, but that of mankind, as if it were a single entity. "I do not want to move away a single inch from divine will," he used to say. His efforts to comply with that will in all his actions were recognized as heroic by the Church and supernaturally confirmed by the miracle required for his beatification.

The solemn beatification ceremony on September 3 celebrated not only the doctrinal highlights of Pio Nono's pontificate, but all of his private and public deeds: the political, social, and administrative reforms that he instituted; his Syllabus of Modern Errors; the extraordinary missionary zeal that he infused into the Church; and the cultural and moral revival of Catholicism in the 19th century. The man, the priest, the bishop, the sovereign, the Pope—Pius IX was beatified in his entirety.



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The Blue Island Log of Herman Gill

by Brendan Galvin

Sepias of an old winter: a man standing
full height under a berg like a grotto
deposited on the beach, behind him
the marshes a frieze of no color,
spiky with terrors, and a northwest wind
you can almost hear in the photo.

He is Herman Gill, keeper of Blue Island
Lighthouse. After months of winter,
he has logged how snowy owls
have drifted down to float criss-cross in
spook flights before the beam of his great light,
and how they refuel their yellow eyes
on the wild offspring of his children's rabbits.

All night his bachelor quarters complain
around the stove. One morning
along his beach route he came upon
a white owl untying the mysteries of a cod,
and more fish sealed in a slab of ice
nearby, like sequined slippers.

Watched by snow, he has learned to look
about him for a pair of gold eyes,
and has minted a weather saw for his logbook:
a white owl in November
means weather you'll remember.

This morning, March 14, he wrote,
Brushing soot from the cold flue ledge, I touched
a thing so soft—a finch, I saw by its beak,
with feathers now gray as a catbird's
from beating long in the chimney
it had entered to get out of the wind.

It died in a blind shiver behind the stove
as I wondered was it the same bird
that beat on the light's windows,
golden in that glare one night, wings
a transparent yellow, lost, confused,
then swept away, the glass reading
twenty-seven, the windspeed fifty-four—
so I thought of Cora and the children,
and our house flaked to a puzzle
by the Doane Brothers and barged
to the mainland for reassembly.

Here there are days so empty of speech
I believe I could detect the sound
light makes as it creaks around toward
equinox, even hear the pop
of Cora's daffodil leaves
taking their explosive stance about
the imminent flower.

But then I open the door to find
only wind bushing around the walls,
and one morning the passing
crew of the *Hannah Rich*, waving on deck
as though reprieved of mortal duty,
a joyride of breaking ice
that kept them and left for the horizon.

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Chronicles Intelligence Assessment

The Serbs and the West

by Srdja Trifkovic

A thousand editorialists have described Vojislav Kostunica, Yugoslavia's new president, as a "moderate nationalist." In fact, Kostunica is no more "nationalistic" than Jacques Chirac or Vaclav Havel. He is a self-described Serbian patriot, who says he wants for his people no more—and certainly no less—than he is prepared to grant to others. That is enough to make him suspect to those who want Serbia to remain a black hole in the heart of the Balkans.

During a decade-long acquaintance with Kostunica, I have had ample opportunity to hear his views on the way Serbia should develop its relations with the Western world in the post-Milosevic period. Those views were summarized in his presentation at a conference organized by the Lord Byron Foundation in Belgrade last January (at which several Rockford Institute representatives spoke, including Christopher Check, Thomas Fleming, and myself.) His remarks, made months before his rise to international prominence, reflect his real views, frankly stated, unburdened by the requirements of diplomatic niceties.

"The question of what the Serbs have to agree to in their future relations with the Western world, and what they must never accept, is central to our future," Kostunica said, warning that "democratization"—as applied to the Balkans from Washington—does not necessarily mean the creation of democratic institutions as such:

> No, this entails finding obedient, pliant people who will assume power . . . [They] provide the prime example of the relativization of "democracy" . . . Whether it is elections, the media, or the functioning of elected bodies, the will of the people is irrelevant. What matters is the will of the authorities in Washington.

As one of his country's most prominent legal scholars, Kostunica was scathing about the lack of respect for the rule of law in the emerging *Pax Americana*. Washington "introduced into the rule of law everything that is opposed to the rule of law: voluntarism, insecurity, arbitrariness." The countless revisions of the Dayton Agreement, which settled the war in Bosnia, are a clear sign he said, but he drew further proof from American diplomat Christopher Hill, who in 1998 insisted that the U.S. plan for Kosovo "must be worded so as to provide different interpretations of the same provisions by the opposing sides, without undermining the agreement in the process."

While condemning Milosevic's ineptitude in foreign affairs, he was equally critical of the "excessive cooperativeness" of some of his colleagues in the opposition:

> Communist apparatchiks, young and old, have replaced one form of Newspeak with another. They are well aware of what can be said and what is forbidden. One must not talk of the NATO bombing and the subsequent conditions in Kosovo, while one has to talk about the Serb "culpability" and The Hague tribunal. In the aftermath of the bombing, this was the basis for institutionalized relations between the European Union, the United States, and the democratic opposition in Serbia. Before that time, those relations were based . . . on the triangle formed by the U.S., the E.U., and Slobodan Milosevic; then it was reduced to the United States dealing with Milosevic.

The focus of Kostunica's remarks was on the need for the Serbs to find a third way "between the extremely uncooperative position of Milosevic and the excessively cooperative position of some of his political opponents." But for the new strategy to be successful, the Serbs have to retain their national identity:

> In order for a nation to survive, it has to know what is its national interest. In order to define its national interest, it has to have a strong national identity. This is a special problem since some Serbs have lost their national identity by becoming "Yugoslavs," "Europeans," "anti-nationalists," globalists, or else sub-national regionalists.

Kostunica warned that, even if future Serbian political elites succeed in "avoiding the many traps that await them as they sail between the Scylla and Charybdis of the modern world, between confrontation with the outside world and a subservient attitude to it," the country will confront the distorted and prejudiced picture of the Serbs that has been created during the past decade. But the truth will come out in the end: "It is now quite clear that factually, politically, and legally, the so-called humanitarian intervention by NATO against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was not justified, that it was the intervention itself that caused the humanitarian catastrophe, the consequences of which will be felt for a long time."

The lesson of that war is that the Serbs cannot count on any "allies," in the old sense, among the great powers:

> They can count, however, on covert and overt allies in the West, in Europe, and on the diffuse but ever more prevalent resistance all over the world to what has come to be known as "benevolent global hegemony." They can count on the growing awareness that the NATO war against Serbia was mediated in the West by lies and manipulations, by the creation of a twisted and false picture about the Serbs that justified their punishment by sanctions, bombs, and politically driven indictments at The Hague.

c

Srdja Trifkovic is the foreign affairs editor of Chronicles.

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* On Christianity *

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 2 No. 12 December 2000

As Slobodan Milosevic fought for his political life in Belgrade, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright condemned him and expressed support for his opposition—while at the same time acting as if the State Department would do everything in its power to help Milosevic survive.

"Kostunica not Clinton administration's man," reported UPI's Martin Sieff on September 25, a day after the Yugoslav presidential election. The former professor is "far from welcome to the Clinton administration":

> Kostunica is not pro-American. He is as virulent a critic of recent U.S. policies as Milosevic himself. And he has said he is determined not to give an inch on the Kosovo issue . . . From the Clinton administration's point of view, the trouble with Kostunica is precisely that he does appear to . . . express the democratic aspirations of the Serbian people. The only trouble is that they are not the aspirations that the Clinton administration would like them to be.

Sieff's assessment was supported by a stream of otherwise inexplicable official "leaks" from Washington about the millions of dollars supposedly given by the U.S. government to the opposition in Serbia. The opening shot came on September 19, just five days before the election, in a front-page story in the *Washington Post* that seemed to reinforce Milosevic's contention that the opposition was in the pay of the Western powers. The story was swiftly translated into Serbian and carried by the Milosevic-controlled media. Opposition supporters were outraged. As Reuters reported from Belgrade on September 26:

> "We do not need their help. Statements like this are not helping the opposition at all," said Gordana, a 35-year-old civil engineer. "If they want Milosevic to leave, they should keep quiet," she said. "They should remember that although the majority of citizens are against Milosevic, we have not forgotten that they bombed us."

One of the three leading French dailies, *Liberation*, reported on September 23 that American "confessions" of covert support to the opposition were a boon to Milosevic, who constantly accused his political opponents of being a fifth column:

> On that pretext he represses . . . unfriendly media or organizations. All admittedly were flooded [with] European and American money. "Faxes, surveys, polls, plane tickets, photocopiers, seminars abroad, media . . . All that is paid by us, and back-up stations in Hungary," testifies a former employee to the State Department, who had worked on the assistance to the Balkans . . .

On September 29, as the post-election struggle in Belgrade intensified, American diplomats in Budapest provided the Associated Press with more pro-Milosevic ammunition. As the AP's George Jahn reported from the Hungarian capital:

> The United States funneled $35 million to opponents of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in little more than a year as part of efforts to weaken him that culminated in his apparent electoral defeat. . . . U.S. diplomats in the region say much of the American money was spent on computers for human rights groups, transmitters for independent B2-92 radio and other non-governmental radio stations and other basics for student organizations and labor unions, such as fax machines and telephones. The funds even paid for a rock band that played at events to mobilize voters ahead of the Sept. 24 elections . . . More money appears to be on the way. The House of Representatives passed a bill Monday authorizing $60 million for further pro-democracy activities in Serbia.

In fact, that bill—H.R. 1064—was designed to continue the sanctions regardless of whether Milosevic fell from power. Under H.R. 1064, the sanctions are to be kept in place until Milosevic's successor complies with every demand from Washington, including the delivery of all indicted war criminals to The Hague. The intent of the bill was apparent from the comments made by Sen. Joseph Biden (D-DE) when he introduced it:

> To be blunt: respect for Dayton and cooperation with The Hague Tribunal must be litmus tests for any democratic government in Serbia. . . . [If] Mr. Kostunica comes to power and thinks that his undeniable and praiseworthy democratic credentials will enable him to pursue an aggressive Serbian nationalist policy with a kinder face, then we must disabuse him of this notion . . . Should our West European allies choose to embrace a post-Milosevic, democratically elected, but ultra-nationalistic Serbia, then I would say to them good luck . . .

When Russian President Vladimir Putin invited both Milosevic and Kostunica to Moscow on October 2, the Associated Press immediately reported the State Department's demand that Russia turn Milosevic over to The Hague Tribunal upon his arrival in Moscow, quoting State Department spokesman Philip Reeker:

> "There's an indictment that

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> calls for any country to hand him over to The Hague. We expect the indictment to be followed," he said. Asked how Putin's offer to mediate could take shape if the moment Milosevic showed up he would face extradition to The Hague, Reeker said: "That's a question for Putin and Milosevic to discuss. We believe [Milosevic] should be out of power, out of Serbia and in The Hague to face justice. Period."

Dr. Kostunica responded by accusing the United States of placing the destiny of one man ahead of the fate of an entire nation. Many in the Russian media were even more blunt. "Washington has thereby done Mr. Milosevic one more service: He now has a pretext for not traveling to Moscow," commented the pro-Western *Kommersant* on October 4.

Ultimately, the subterfuge didn't work: The people of Serbia took matters into their own hands and threw Milosevic out. Within days, however, Mrs. Albright, Robin Cook, and other supporters of last year's NATO bombing started claiming credit for Milosevic's downfall. But as Simon Jenkins wrote in the *Times* of London (October 7), it was not the bombing, the sanctions, or the posturing of NATO politicians that got rid of Milosevic; in fact, his fall was impeded by Western intervention:

> [O]utsiders such as [British Foreign Secretary] Mr Cook should stop rewriting history to their own gain. They did not topple Mr Milosevic. They did not bomb democracy into the last Communist dictatorship in Europe. They merely blocked the Danube and sent Serb politics back to the Dark Ages of autocracy. The fall of Mr Milosevic began with an election that he called and then denied, spurring the electors to demand that the army respect their decision and protect their sovereignty. For that, Yugoslavia's democracy deserves the credit, not Nato's Tomahawk missiles.

This assessment was echoed by the BBC's John Simpson, writing in the *Sunday Telegraph* on October 8:

> The kind of people who made last Thursday's revolution [were] depressed in equal measure by the careless savagery of the Nato bombing and the sheer nastiness of the Milosevic regime.

While Serbia's misery has abated, the less fortunate people of Iraq continue to be squeezed between the Western hammer and their ruler's anvil. We now learn from Scottish sources that their experience of "careless savagery" included the deliberate poisoning of Iraq's water supplies by the allies during the Gulf War. According to the *Sunday Herald* (September 17):

> The US-led allied forces deliberately destroyed Iraq's water supply during the Gulf War—flagrantly breaking the Geneva Convention and causing thousands of civilian deaths. Since the war ended in 1991 the allied nations have made sure that any attempts to make contaminated water safe have been thwarted . . . Thomas J Nagy, Professor of Expert Systems at George Washington University with a doctoral fellowship in public health, told the *Sunday Herald*: "Those who saw nothing wrong in producing [this plan], those who ordered its production and those who knew about it and have remained silent for ten years would seem to be in violation of Federal Statute and perhaps have even conspired to commit genocide."

Professor Nagy obtained a detailed seven-page document prepared by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency. Entitled *Iraq Water Treatment Vulnerabilities*, it was issued the day after the war started and circulated to all major allied command officers. The document reported that Iraq had gone to great trouble to provide a supply of clean water to its population, but it had to depend on importing specialized equipment and purification chemicals. The report then stated:

> Failing to secure supplies will result in a shortage of pure drinking water for much of the population. This could lead to increased incidents, if not epidemics, of disease and certain pure-water dependent industries becoming incapacitated . . . Full degradation of the water treatment system probably will take at least another six months.

According to the *Sunday Herald*, Iraq's eight multipurpose dams were repeatedly hit during the Gulf War, smashing the infrastructure for flood control, municipal and industrial water storage, irrigation, and hydroelectric power. Four of Iraq's seven major pumping stations were destroyed, as were 31 municipal water and sewage facilities—20 of them in Baghdad, resulting in sewage pouring into the Tigris. Water-purification plants were incapacitated throughout Iraq. Thousands of civilians died as a result of those attacks. The paper concluded:

> Water-borne diseases in Iraq today are both endemic and epidemic. They include typhoid, dysentery, hepatitis, cholera and polio (which had previously been eradicated), along with a litany of others . . . Chlorine and essential equipment parts needed to repair and clear the water system have been banned from entering the country under the UN "hold" system.

The Iraqis may derive some comfort from the knowledge that the allied governments are equally secretive regarding the suffering of their own people. The *Sunday Times* reported on September 3 that "tens of thousands" of British and American soldiers are dying from exposure to radiation from depleted uranium (DU) shells fired during the Gulf War:

> The findings will undermine the British and American governments' claims that Gulf War syndrome does not exist and intensify pressure from veterans on both sides of the Atlantic for compensation . . . Once inside the body, DU causes a slow death from cancers, irreversible kidney damage or wastage from immune deficiency disorders. In the UK more than 400 veterans are estimated to have died from "Gulf War syndrome."

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The Autocrat of the Dinner Table

by Thomas Fleming

"But what is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue?"
—Edmund Burke

An Enemy of the State:
The Life of Murray N. Rothbard
by Justin Raimondo
Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books;
400 pp., $35.00

H. Ward Sterett

Murray Rothbard was like the elephant the blind Chinamen in the story tried to describe. Everyone who knew Murray saw only one or two sides of him: There was Murray the happy warrior who campaigned for the soul of the Old Right, the New Left, the Libertarian Party, and—once again, near the end of his all-too-short life—the Old Right; Murray the libertarian ideologue who, in collaboration with the Volker Fund, the Cato Institute, and the Ludwig von Mises Institute, worked tirelessly to craft a practical consensus that was rooted in individual liberty; Murray the scholar and intellectual historian who assembled a prodigious amount of obscure information on business cycles, Rockefeller plots, and—perhaps most importantly—the true history of economic thought, which was the subject of his concluding masterwork.

Murray has many friends and enemies alive today who will no doubt take issue with Justin Raimondo's fair-minded and sympathetic account of his mentor's career. Small minds and "movement" (both conservative and libertarian) types often ended up hating Rothbard, either because he revealed the hollowness of their pretensions or because his expansive temperament saw farther than most of his warmest admirers. But Murray could make friends with the most unlikely people. Mel Bradford (about as opposite a number as one could hope to find) always spoke fondly of Murray, praising his courtesy and essential decency; he also gave high marks to the economist's understanding of Southern history and the Southern cause. As Raimondo points out, there was no contradiction in Rothbard's support for the South in the 1860's and Black Power radicals in the 1960's: Both defended real people and communities from predatory big governments. Even our Washington editor, Dr. Samuel Francis—not a man given to excessive sentimentality—was shaken by news of Murray's death, and whenever I think of Murray, the lines of a popular Victorian poem (a translation from Callimachus) comes to mind:

> I wept as I remembered how often
> you and I
> Had tired the sun with talking and
> sent him down the sky

As Raimondo makes clear, Rothbard earned his reputation for being cross-grained and short with people. He did not suffer fools gladly—or dullards or lifestyle libertarians who did not own neckties or intellectuals who staked out theoretical positions so radical that they were able to justify going along with the powers-that-be. I, on the other hand, never saw him even annoyed, if you discount the time we took him for a half-mile walk through Colonial Williamsburg. ("What is this," he complained, "the Bataan death march?") The only thing I ever wrote that elicited a complaint from Murray was an essay counseling Stoic resignation. "I like you better as a fighter," he told me, explaining that even spiritual resignation was a form of defeatism.

Many people have suggested that Rothbard adopted his conservative and libertarian principles in protest against the typical leftism of his New York Jewish family. Writing of his background in a *Chronicles* essay, Rothbard said: "I grew up in a Communist culture. The middle-class Jews in New York whom I lived among, whether family, friends, or neighbors, were either Communists or fellow-travelers in the Communist orbit. I had two sets of Communist Party uncles and aunts, on both sides of my family."

But Murray Rothbard's intellectual

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progress was quite different from that of the self-serving neoconservatives who made the short and safe journey from Stalinism to Trotskyism, while denouncing the friends and relatives who were capable of loyalty, at least, to Uncle Joe. Murray's mother seems to have been, at worst, a sentimental liberal, and his father, David Rothbard, was, as Raimondo describes him, a man who had broken out of the ghetto, a "strong believer in science and rationalism," who had (as Murray wrote in a high-school essay) "risen from an impoverished immigrant to a citizen of value and responsibility." Far from wanting to break with his father as the central act in some Freudian psychodrama, Rothbard viewed the development of his economic and philosophical individualism as the tribute a loyal son owes to an honorable father.

Rothbard displayed the same loyalty to the country that had adopted his family. Unlike so many leftists (and some libertarians), he did not swear fealty to an ideological America he had invented or borrowed from a textbook. In fact, Rothbard loved the gritty details—the deals and swindles, the crackpots and conspirators who give American history a richer texture than, say, an Ayn Rand novel or the Boy Scout oath.

When Rothbard broke with the conservative movement on the issue of Vietnam and the Cold War, his former allies at *National Review* attempted to portray him as an unstable crackpot and a cultural leftist, and NR's obituary of Murray represents, along with Mr. Buckley's attack on the dead Ayn Rand, that magazine's moral nadir. Rothbard was a good hater, but he was a better friend, and he was willing to forgive most of his disloyal followers, so long as they were doing something worth doing. He forgave his disciple Williamson Evers for supporting the global-trade-regulation racket called NAFTA, and he even forgave Justin Raimondo for betraying him in the Libertarian Party.

What, in the end, is Rothbard's legacy, apart from several good books and acres of pointed polemics and ideological trailblazing? For one thing, he was—despite his sometimes eccentric individualism—an institution builder. Neither the Cato Institute nor the Libertarian Party would be conceivable without Murray, to say nothing of the John Randolph Club (which Murray cofounded with his equally cranky counterpart on the Old Right), the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Auburn, Alabama, the Center for Libertarian Studies, and perhaps the most successful project (established several years after Rothbard's death) *Antiwar.com*, the website that has made Justin Raimondo the best known of Rothbard's living disciples.

Raimondo suggests that Rothbard had been looking all his life for an ideological entrepreneur to be his partner in crimes against the state. He thought he had finally found such a person in Ed Crane, but they broke—for reasons that Raimondo describes with admirable delicacy. Near the end of his life, he found another entrepreneurial collaborator in Llewellyn Rockwell.

It would take a Rothbard to do justice to Rothbard, but Justin Raimondo (who is, perhaps, the most faithful of all of Murray's disciples) has made a very good start. Unlike many Rothbardians, Raimondo sees his mentor as a philosopher who practiced politics, who crafted (in Lord Acton's definition of liberalism) "a philosophy seeking a policy."

A more critical reading of Rothbard would require a closer scrutiny of his unexamined assumption that moral decisions are made by autonomous individuals who are possessed of that strange manna known as "rights." When we began collaborating, Murray made it clear that he wanted to avoid any discussion of first principles: We were forming an alliance, not coalescing into a unified movement. As time went on, however, he began to understand that there might be other means for defending liberty than a theory of rights; and once, after dinner, he burst out in an explosion of enthusiasm: "I get it: When you talk about natural duties (e.g., of parents), you are also making a rational argument for protecting people from state intervention."

I am not suggesting that Murray Rothbard was about to abandon his philosophy of rights. He did come to realize, however, that there is more than one way to protect human liberties.

Rothbard was at his best as a critic of socialism (including the socialism of the Republican Party), and even though I often disagreed with his language and theoretical approach, I rarely, if ever, was disturbed by his most radical proposals. Only small minds cannot conceive of privately owned roads, and one major Roman historian (Ernst Badian) has defended tax farming (private corporations that receive contracts for collecting taxes). We struck a bargain from the beginning: Although I believe that the commonwealth is a natural and necessary part of human social life, I nevertheless agreed with Murray that about 90 percent of what modern states do is evil and destructive. "When we get to the last ten percent," I said, "it will be time for us to quarrel." The offer stands open to any libertarian who wants to work with us for the common good (if that phrase is not too "socialistic").

Where Murray's theories fell short was in describing the "good life," whose pursuit is the natural and proper end of man. He took good things (such as conventional morality, the family, innocent pleasures) for granted and even understood that liberty can only thrive under certain cultural conditions. Where he failed—where all philosophers fail—was in not spelling out what those conditions were.

This is what made our collaboration so fruitful: Between his anarcho-libertarian critique of the state and *Chronicles*' emphasis on the culture of Christendom, we had assembled (at least potentially) the fuse and the dynamite. We were waiting for circumstances to provide the match. And then he died, and so many of our gaudy visions fell to the ground in pieces, like the piñata at yesterday's party.

Anyone who wants to understand the mind of Murray Rothbard, libertarian principles, and the history of the American right should buy, read, and take notes on this book. c

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Mad Cows and Englishman

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Dreamer of the Day:
Francis Parker Yockey and the Postwar Fascist International
by Kevin Coogan
New York: Autonomedia; 644 pp., $16.95

Cool Croatia
by Tomislav Sunic
Glostonbury, England: Vineyard Books, 60 pp., £2.5

Standardbearers:
British Roots of the New Right
Jonathan Bowden, Eddy Butter, and Adrian Davies, editors
Kent, England: Bloomsbury Forum, 176 pp., £6.00

◆

In recent months, several works have appeared that throw light on the attitudes and concerns of various rightist movements lacking the imprimatur of an established right. While it is hard to generalize about the disparate thinkers and groups featured in these books, they are alike in having no relationship to the American right.

Also characteristic of these movements is their indifference to the obsessive anticommunism typical of postwar American conservatism. Although admittedly an emotionally distraught loner with a morbid attraction to Hitler, Francis Parker Yockey, the subject of Kevin Coogan's book, combined anti-egalitarian and antimaterialist opinions with a favorable view of the Soviet Union. For Yockey, a disaffected Catholic drawn to Spengler's vision of a despiritualized modern civilization, the Soviets were all that stood in the way of an American empire marked by consumerism and the leveling of cultural and social distinctions. Despite the fact that Yockey, who died as an FBI prisoner in 1960, was a Soviet agent whose social criticism was laced with offensive antisemitic tirades, his comments on the American world order, although written in the 40's and 50's, sound entirely contemporary.

Both the English musings of Tomislav Sunic, a multilingual Croatian man of letters, and the unsettling ideas expressed by the contributors to the *Standardbearers* anthology exemplify other thoughts out of season, many of which could have been written by Nietzsche. Most of the views expressed by these authors, criticizing dominant political and cultural forces, lead me to conclude that circumstances are not very different in Europe from what they are here in the United States. Sunic is conspicuously upset that the American mania for global democracy has spread to Europe, and that the entire Western world, while acquiring wealth and succumbing to multiculturalism, has become morally degenerate. He has little use for either European or American culture in its present form, and his meditations emphasize the family resemblances between communist and "moribund capitalist" societies.

The *Standardbearers* anthology, produced by British New Right members of the Bloomsbury Forum, is a focused attempt to forge a defense of "English historical national identity." Basing their appeal to identity politics on historical models, the contributors offer pointed biographies of great Englishmen of the past. Some names (such as Samuel Johnson, Lords Salisbury and Palmerston, Edmund Burke, Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton, Benjamin Disraeli, and John Maynard Keynes) should be familiar to *Chronicles* readers; others (in particular, William George Penney and Sir Arnold Bax) will likely draw blank stares. What is most striking about the *Standardbearers* project, ably introduced by Antony Flew, is the editors' decision to create an eclectic pedigree for their intellectual position. Being adversarial is what the contributors are about, and what unites the socialist patriots, old-fashioned Tories, unconventional playwrights, and libertarians depicted in this anthology is their hostility to the world of Tony Blair, whom Flew properly calls "the most radical Prime Minister that the United Kingdom has ever had."

A point of reference for most contributors is Hal Colebatch's *Blair's Britain* (Claridge Press, 1999), a sketch of the present prime minister's project for modernizing and internationalizing his country. Although Colebatch does not provide a detailed or particularly coherent treatment of his subject, he marshals compelling evidence to underscore Blair's radical cultural and social views. He also discredits the whistling-in-the-dark that British Tories, including Margaret Thatcher, have engaged in. (Because Blair is fiscally more restrained than earlier Labour leaders, he must therefore be a closet conservative.) By contrast, Colebatch and the contributors to *Standardbearers* take seriously Blair's statements that he hopes to make England multicultural, strip it of its unique national heritage, weaken further the monarchy and the House of Lords, and criminalize "insensitive" speech and thought.

Against this revolutionary attempt to dispossess a nation, the Bloomsbury Forum raises the standard of English national particularity. Whether the "standardbearers" were socialists or free-marketeers, what distinguished them from Blair's "Cool Britannia" was their pride in belonging to a distinct nation. It is precisely the hatred of England's identity that marks those whom these patriots would have opposed were they still alive. The general point is well taken: Despite the supposed fiscal centrism that leads American "conservative" Ben Wattenberg to characterize today's Eurosocialists as Thatcherites and Reaganites, Blair and French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin are far more radical than were earlier generations of European left-of-center politicians. Their cultural goals, not their unwillingness to nationalize private industries, betray their hatred of their own peoples. What defines today's radical (or, perhaps, establishment) politics is its combination of multiculturalism and thought control. Derek Turner of *Right NOW!* and his friends see this clearly. What is uncertain, however, is that we can turn any of this around by invoking "standardbearers."

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Risking Nothing

by Philip Jenkins

God's Name in Vain: The Wrongs and Rights of Religion in Politics
by Stephen L. Carter
New York: Basic Books; 264 pp., $26.00

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Americans like to think this is a land of diversity unparalleled anywhere in the world, but in religious matters at least, such a view is far from the truth. America remains today substantially what it has always been, namely, a Christian country. While the United States is indeed home to a remarkable number of religious denominations, overwhelmingly, these are currents within the broader stream of Christianity. Adherents of non-Christian religions are strikingly few. If we combine the best plausible estimates for the numbers of American Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus, then we are speaking at most of four percent of the total population. Even if we exclude Mormons from the Christian community, this only raises the non-Christian total to around six percent. The degree of religious diversity in the United States is very limited compared to what we find in many African and Asian countries, where religious minorities commonly make up 20 percent of the people, if not more. Contrary to American perceptions, some of the most diverse lands are found in the Middle East, which Westerners often imagine in terms of Muslim homogeneity and intolerance: Countries such as Egypt and Iraq are far more diverse than the United States. American religious homogeneity is actually likely to *increase* in the coming decades, as our population becomes more diverse ethnically. A large proportion of the latest wave of Asian, Latino, and even Arab immigration is Christian, often fervently so, while the non-Christians seem ripe for evangelistic efforts, particularly by conservative and Pentecostal denominations.

The existence of a powerful American Christianity is open to many interpretations: Some believe that a Christian people requires a Christian government, with all that implies about religious exercises in schools, while extremists advocate a theocratic state. On the other hand, many argue that the sheer numerical weight of Christianity requires the counterbalance of a rigid secular state. Hence the ongoing and often trivial-seeming controversies about public displays of religion—crèche scenes on courthouse lawns, commencement prayers, and the like.

Stephen L. Carter is a Yale law professor whose 1994 book, *The Culture of Disbelief*, made a provocative and balanced contribution to the debate about the role of religion in a supposedly secular state. His earlier work bore the subtitle, "How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion," and offered many telling examples of the selective response by the media and the political elite to public expressions of faith. In secular eyes, it was completely acceptable for Martin Luther King to engage in his crusade, and even to be identified publicly as "the Reverend," but utterly taboo when conservative politicians (or even clergy) invoke God in their particular causes. The more the secular elites seek to exclude religion from the public sphere, the further removed America's rulers become from their subjects, and the more the media depict the worldview of the ordinary person as a form of incomprehensible fanaticism. I offer this modest proposal to some aspiring filmmaker in search of a topic: Make a documentary that strings together the typical depictions of religious believers or pastors in mainstream American movies of the last 20 years or so. The clips could be united by titles such as "homicidal maniac," "babbling fanatic," "hate-spouting hypocrite," "child molester," "self-hating homosexual"—the list is endless.

Religious issues remain at the forefront of American politics. The proper place of religion was discussed in the context of the religious forms affected by President Clinton's "confession" of sin in the Monica Lewinsky affair, and the response by the liberal media. Over the last few months, both presidential (and vice-presidential) candidates have tried to out-God each other. Increasingly, Americans seem to favor a greater public role for religious voices; see the surveys in an important recent book from the Brookings Institute, *The Diminishing Divide*. A new salvo by Carter was therefore to be expected, and his work thoroughly meets our expectations. *God's Name in Vain* is a sane, intelligent, and lucid analysis, which can profitably be read by activists of all shades, as well as by anyone interested in American politics.

Carter offers a new assessment of the state of the debate. His judicious views are summarized in two primary theses: "First, that there is nothing wrong, and much right, with the robust participation of the nation's many religious voices in debates over matters of public moment. Second, that religions—although not democracy—will almost certainly lose their best, most spiritual selves when they choose to be involved in the partisan, electoral side of our politics." These two views may initially seem contradictory—amounting, crudely, to the proposition that while the churches have a right to speak out, they really shouldn't—but Carter's case is far more subtle than this reductive summary might suggest. He stresses the critical role played by religion, often of the most fundamentalist and evangelical stripe, in political debates throughout American history, not least in the civil-rights movement. And just how, exactly, should 19th-century religious activists have refrained from crossing the wall of separation between church and state on issues such as slavery? To understand American history, we must never underestimate the sincerity or determination of those in every generation who have sought to construct "the kingdom of God on earth," however they conceived this goal. As Carter argues, "Religion, in short, has no sphere. . . . The law today too often behaves as though it does." Carter goes so far as to proclaim that, in a hypothetical conflict between God and country, he would be required to relinquish the cause of his country: As much as he loves the United States, it is no more eternal or indispensable than the Roman Empire of its day.

Yet *God's Name in Vain* is no call for a religio-political crusade, still less for a specifically religious agenda in politics. Carter warns religious activists that, "When you touch politics, it touches you back. Politics is a dirty business at best, and leaves few of its participants unsullied. The religious enjoy no special immunity. On the contrary—the religious face special risks." Not the least of these risks is that religious activists will be held to a higher standard of responsibility than secular politicians. The public will, rightly, demand the highest possible standards of behavior and will be deeply sensitive to any apparent hypocrisy or power-seeking, not to mention more obvious failings in financial and sexual integrity. If religious leaders fail to meet these standards, the results will be disastrous not

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just for the causes they have adopted, but for the denominations and creeds they represent. The experiences of the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition present many such examples.

Ultimately, Carter warns, the danger is that, as religion "gets into" politics, it becomes no more than politics—and what a fall that is. At worst, in such instances, religion really *does* become the worst kind of hypocrisy, even a mask for demagogues. We recall Santayana's celebrated definition of fanaticism as redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your original goal. Carter concludes with a plea never to forget the heart of the matter: "Without renewal, without a retreat from the wilderness and a return to the garden, without more time spent listening to the voice of God . . . without these necessities, religion will be nothing too."

Philip Jenkins teaches at Pennsylvania State University. His most recent book is Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History *(Oxford University Press).*

The Lewis Gun

by J.O. Tate

Wyndham Lewis: Painter and Writer
by Paul Edwards
New Haven and London: Yale University Press; 584 pp., $75.00

◆

Professor Edwards has set himself to a daunting task in taking on Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957). Lewis the painter is a difficult task for many reasons: first, because he attacked the British art establishment early on, trashing Roger Fry and Bloomsbury and later Kenneth Clark, thereby laying a groundwork of controversy and contempt; second, because his shattered career caused much of his early work to be lost and some of his later work to be less than excellent; and third, on account of the nature of much of that work (sometimes representational, sometimes abstract, but always lacking in obvious appeal and certainly no part of any school except perhaps Lewis's own Vorticism). Edwards has shown Lewis's graphic work to have been driven by his obsession with what we may call the modern metaphysical. In his paintings, we hover over Cartesian vortices, as Melville's Ishmael did. Let me add (as if you could stop me) that Edwards' treatment of Lewis's graphic art is the most persuasive and instructive I have ever seen: well worth the price of admission. The comparison here would be with Walter Michel's authoritative catalogue and Hugh Kenner's essay in *Wyndham Lewis: Paintings and Drawings* (1971) as well as Richard Cork on Vorticism (1976), but Edwards' analyses seem both superior and needed.

But though that is much, it is not all—far from it. Edwards has also addressed himself to Lewis the writer, of itself a challenging, even treacherous subject, again for a host of reasons, among them (1) that Lewis was (is) the most politically incorrect major author in modern British literature, having explored with brilliantly analytical hostility the meanings of feminism, the youth cult, homosexuality, the "gilded bolshevism" of the 20's, and all the other idols of the *Zeitgeist* triumphant today; (2) that he puffed Adolf Hitler more than once in the early 30's in a misguided attempt to avert a second world war; and (3) that Lewis sometimes published hastily and assembled his books badly, adding further damage to his reputation. Straightening all this out (50 books in 50 years) in what Carolyn Heilbrun has called "the Age of Woolf" (yes, Virginia was one of Lewis's favorite punching bags) is no task for the faint of heart.

Add to all the textual, aesthetic, and political problems the challenge of Lewis's prophetic insight, idiosyncratic expression, and extensive historical and philosophical reading, and there is inherent difficulty in the complexity of the material and therefore in its exposition. Edwards has performed brilliantly and incorporated many new insights of his own, as well as of other recent critical and scholarly work. One more reason to have a copy of this book, then, is for the notes and bibliography, quite valuable in their own right. I must say that I regret that the comments on Lewis's writing aren't complete. Two of the stories in *Rotting Hill* are masterful, and *The Red Priest* has something going for it as well.

But never mind, for we come then to the point: The paintings and the writings were the product of one man, though not perhaps of one unified sensibility. The sense of crisis in Lewis's work is not finally his but rather his modernist sense of our crisis. That crisis took many forms, religious, philosophical, aesthetic, and other; above all, it was that of human identity—both individual and in the mass—in the machine age. As we begin the 21st century, we can find no better explorer of the "metaphysics of the not-self" than Wyndham Lewis. On the shelf beside Lewis's best work (*Tarr, The Childermass, Time and Western Man, The Apes of God, Snooty Baronet, The Revenge for Love, Malign Fiesta*, and others: I am thinking of the scholarly editions of Black Sparrow Press), this integrated exposition by Paul Edwards has a valued and necessary place. I think I can close nicely with his own closing words:

> [Lewis's] work provides the most comprehensive critique we have of the Modernist urge to overcome our dereliction by violently breaking through to a realm of authenticity, a reality transcending our divided condition; driven by such urges himself, he yet knew that it was our privilege to be no more than imperfect imitators of that authenticity, and urged us to realize that we must be Apes of God rather than gods ourselves.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

RECEIVED WISDOM

Raphael and the Noble Task by Catherine Salton (New York: HarperCollins, 157 pages, $20.00)

Catherine Salton has produced a stunning debut novel, just in time for Christmas. Raphael is a chimère—not a gargoyle, it must be understood—on the west façade of a great cathedral in the Middle Ages. His noble task I will leave to each reader to discover, for this is a beautiful fable: whimsical, reverent (Salton is a devout Catholic), witty, and deeply moving. I fully expect *Raphael and the Noble Task* to take its place on the shelf of Christmas classics, alongside Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's "*Christmas Jenny*," Truman Capote's "*A Christmas Memory*," and, yes, Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

—Bill Kauffman

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by Samuel Francis

The Constitution, R.I.P.

On July 22 of this year, the *Washington Times* published, as the weekly installment of its "Civil War" section, a long article by a gentleman named Mackubin Thomas Owens, described as "professor of strategy and force planning" at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, under the headline, "Secession's apologists gut Constitution, history." The burden of the article was to argue that both the Confederate defenders of secession in 1861 and their intellectual descendants today (in what is sometimes dubbed the "neoconfederate movement") were and are full of beans. Professor Owens, a disciple of Lincoln apologist Harry Jaffa, expressed the view—shared by Alexander Hamilton, John Marshall, Daniel Webster, and Abraham Lincoln, among others—that the U.S. Constitution, far from being a "compact among the states" as the Confederates claimed, is really an act of a single united people. It follows from that view, of course, that neither "states' rights" in any significant sense nor secession, let alone such doctrines as "nullification," are constitutionally valid; that the seceding states of 1861 were engaged in acts of treason and rebellion; and that those who support their doctrine today are not only in error but also probably of dubious loyalty themselves.

It was not the first time that the *Times*, whose editor likes to describe it as the "official voice of the conservative movement," gave prominence to what is generally (but not very usefully) known as the "nationalist" theory of the Constitution. In 1998, the editorial page published a long letter from a reader articulating the same view of the Constitution, which was challenged in a subsequent letter, published some days later. In the case of the Owens article this year, however, no one seems to have bothered to question the accuracy of his interpretation.

Yet the truth is that Professor Owens—as well as Hamilton, Marshall, Webster, and Lincoln, not to mention Professor Jaffa—is the one who is full of beans. The "nationalist" (let us, for the sake of clarity, call it the "unitary") interpretation is wrong; indeed, it is so obviously wrong that its partisans have to rely almost entirely on unsubstantiated assertions to make the case for it.

My purpose, however, is not to rehearse the argument for the compact theory or to refute the unitary interpretation. The simplest way to substantiate the compact theory is to point to both the content and the grammar of the Declaration of Independence, in which the "representatives of the United States" declare that "these united colonies" are "free and independent states" and assert that "they" (the "states") possess "full power . . . to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do." The point is that the Declaration does not establish a unitary state but recognizes 13 states, which are consistently spoken of in the plural throughout the document (as they are in the Constitution). The other obvious point is that at no time did the American people as a whole vote on national independence, adoption of the Declaration, or ratification of the Constitution, nor indeed do they so vote today. They assented to independence, the Declaration, and the Constitution as and by the states, and even today there is no single elected federal officeholder who is chosen by the vote of all the American people apart from the states. This is clearly true of senators and congressmen, but it is also true of the president, who remains chosen by the votes of the Electoral College, which is appointed by the states. Moreover, it is three fourths of the states that are able to amend the Constitution, not a majority or super-majority of the American people as a whole. The primacy of the states is and always has been obvious, and there is little more to be said about it.

Nevertheless, as Professor Owens' article and similar expressions make clear, the compact theory of the Constitution, regardless of its historical and legalistic correctness, is virtually defunct as an operative doctrine of constitutional interpretation; and with its consignment to oblivion, the rest of the Constitution has vanished as well. Although there seems to be some revival of interest in the Tenth Amendment, states' rights—the heart of real federalism—died with the compact theory. States' rights make no sense if the compact theory is false, the union was really formed by a single act of the whole people, and states are mere administrative units of the central government. Along with states' rights vanishes much of the rest of the Bill of Rights, at least in its original and correct function as a restraint on the federal government, as well as any other restraint on big government. If the federal government is the direct representative of the "people" as a whole, then it can do pretty much whatever it wishes to do, and we are delivered into territory perilously close to Rousseau's General Will. The use of the Commerce Clause and the "Incorporation Doctrine" to overturn state and local laws has largely completed the process. Today, the United States simply no longer has a constitution at all, apart from what the ruling class and its running dogs on the Supreme Court say is the constitution. Moreover, so defunct is the real Constitution that neither most academics, like the learned Professor Owens, nor most self-described conservatives, such as a good many of my former colleagues at the *Washington Times*, any longer know what the real Constitution was or even that there used to be a Constitution quite different from the one that now is purported to prevail.

There is, of course, sort of a constitution, and you may discover something about what it says by listening to the college students surveyed several years ago who believed that the statement "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" came from it. This passage from the *Communist Manifesto*, which served as the official motto of the Soviet Union, is in fact a fairly accurate description of what the current constitution holds. How the new constitution came to be adopted has been the subject of several expositions in recent years by, among others, Garry Wills, James MacPherson, and Columbia University law professor George Fletcher.

Last year, in this space, I quoted Professor Fletcher's view, published in the *New Republic* in 1997, that the original Constitution was abolished by the American Civil War and that Lincoln's Gettysburg Address "signals the beginning of a new Constitution" in which "equality, absent from the original document, comes front and center. . . . the United

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States evolves from an elitist republic into a democracy 'of the people, by the people, for the people.'" Professor Fletcher's view is almost identical to that of Professor Jaffa and his disciples on the "right," except that they claim that Lincoln merely restored the real Constitution. Professor MacPherson argues much the same as Professor Fletcher, that Lincoln was a "revolutionary statesman" who presided over the "Second American Revolution," as does Garry Wills, who writes that "Lincoln was a revolutionary in another sense as well, the one Willmoore Kendall denounced him for—he not only put the Declaration in a new light as a matter of founding *law*, but put its central proposition, equality, in a newly favored position as a principle of the Constitution (which, as the Chicago *Times* noticed, never uses the word)."

What is perhaps most important about the revolution that abolished the old, real Constitution and established the new one is that the revolution has been so complete that its defenders and apologists do not even feel the need to explain how a Constitution purportedly founded on the consent of the governed could be abolished simply by acts of force in the course of the Civil War and a new one, encapsulated in the Gettysburg Address, enthroned without any pretense of amendment or ratification. So irrelevant is the real Constitution to such scholars as Mr. Wills that he can glibly acknowledge that "equality" is the main principle of the new constitution even though the word was entirely absent from the original one. The apologists for the new constitution know that the destruction of the old and real Constitution has been so complete that they do not even need to pretend that the transition to the new one took place in a manner consistent with the procedures prescribed by the old one. The old Constitution was the product of Southern slaveowners and allowed for their political predominance, and because it did not mention "equality" and was, in fact, anti-egalitarian in many of its premises and provisions, it has therefore been discredited by the animating doctrine at the heart of the new constitution.

There is little doubt that the "New Constitutionalists" are essentially correct. Although both James J. Kilpatrick and the late M.E. Bradford correctly argued that the old Constitution survived the Reconstruction amendments and the Supreme Court's interpretations of them, the Civil War nevertheless mortally wounded the Old Republic and the Constitution that defined it, and Lincoln, whatever his role and whatever his intentions, has become the human symbol of this revolution, just as Lenin and Castro are symbols of other revolutions. The Old Republic and the real Constitution lingered on until the Roosevelt Supreme Court and its successors killed them off for good.

But the new constitution did not displace the old one simply because Lincoln and his armies smashed the old Constitution and its defenders. The new constitution flourished because it served the purposes and interests of the emerging social forces of the nation, mainly what the Marxist scholar Barrington Moore, Jr., called "the last capitalist revolution," the leaders of which quickly evolved into the plutocratic ruling class of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The political changes and their military enforcement were merely the icing on the underlying cake of social and economic transformation and the new elite that gained power from it.

What was involved in the death of the old Constitution, in other words, was a bit more than a change of mind on the part of a lot of Americans or a plot carried out by a handful of ambitious and unscrupulous men. If the decline and fall of constitutional government in the United States had been only that, it might still be possible to change men's minds back, persuade them of the virtues of the old Constitution, and restore it. But the victory of the social, economic, and political revolutions that swept it away suggests that one of the main reasons for the failure of the old Constitution was that a declining number of social interests found it a useful instrument of government. In virtually every confrontation in early American history between the compact theory and the unitary theory, the compact theory lost: The Federalists prevailed over the Anti-Federalists; John Marshall's views triumphed over those of his critics; Andrew Jackson triumphed over John C. Calhoun in the nullification controversy; and, of course, the Union prevailed over the Confederacy. And one reason for these victories is that lots of people stood to gain a great deal from a unitary government that could unify the country, suppress centrifugal pressures, establish a national market for profitmaking, and prevent the nation from disintegrating. Only the Southern states retained a strong vested interest in a decentralized republic and the doctrine of states' rights that helped guarantee it; and by the early 20th century, even these states were willing to compromise on their rights when they stood to gain from doing so. By the time of the civil-rights movement and its revolutionary demand for the fulfillment of Lincoln's egalitarian rhetoric, the South's resistance to the unitary state had become so compromised by its own hunger for farm subsidies, defense contracts, highway funds, and other federally financed internal improvements that its insistence on states' rights principles as the reason for its opposition to racial integration could no longer be taken seriously.

The old Constitution, in other words, died because hardly anyone in the United States really wanted it to survive, and those who did were often not very serious about it and eventually became powerless to keep it alive. Today, it no longer matters how cleverly we refute the unitary interpretation or articulate the compact theory, because the document to which they pertain is effectively defunct, and its death is obvious not only in the triumph of the civil-rights movement but also in the victory of every constitutional fantasy concocted by the Supreme Court.

Paleoconservatives today, who are virtually defined by their adherence to the Old Republic established by the original and real Constitution, therefore need to make a decision. Their appeals to the old Constitution have now become not only politically and juridically irrelevant but have acquired the stale and arid odor of antiquarianism. Their cause is no longer well served by regurgitation of archaic constitutional niceties and invocations to constitutionalist idols. The decision paleoconservatives need to make is whether to abandon all appeals to constitutionalism and make use of alternative modes of argumentation for what those appeals have traditionally tried to defend, or whether, acknowledging the death of the old Constitution, they should begin working for a new constitutional structure that seeks to replicate as many of the positive attributes of the old Constitution as possible, including its guarantees of federalism and local autonomy. Which ever course they choose will be no less radical and revolutionary than the path that led to the destruction of the old Constitution.

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Letter From Texas

by Wayne Allensworth

Apocalypse Now

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We are flying amid fluffy, white cotton-ball clouds that reach above us to tremendous heights, forming darker mountain peaks lined with crevices and tinged by the pinkish-orange glow of the setting sun. My six-year-old daughter, eyes wide in innocent fascination, whispers, "Is this where God lives?"

"Even higher," I answer.

"But His angels are here," she asserts.

"Maybe."

Maybe. I am pondering the lost innocence of childhood, stripped away as the evil princes of the consumerist kingdom seduce our progeny. As we leave the sky for the road, I am also realizing just how naive the Religious Right must be to believe that a Christian culture can survive in the world of "democratic capitalism." The mud flaps on the 18-wheeler ahead of us read "Jesus is Lord. Truckers for Christ."

It's 105 degrees on the road to central Texas, the hill country, and on to the Gulf Coast. Dallas and Fort Worth are no longer distinct entities but a mass of grotesque strip malls that stretch from Plano to "Cow Town's" invisible city limits. It's the "Metroplex" nowadays, another step on the way to global homogenization and the obliteration of local identity and geography. But the furnace-like heat and merciless sun remind the Masters of the Universe that there are forces they cannot control. The temperature reaches 109. The "Metroplex" recedes in the rearview mirror; the rocky, brushy, dusty terrain, scorched by the sun and dotted with cattle, horses, and dried-up little towns, replaces it. Texas is still here after all. The towns are named Comanche, Zephyr, Flat (not to be confused with Flatonia), and Dimebox. Texas has always been a harsh place, once the vast Comacheria, bordered by the Apacheria to the Southwest, the battleground of red and brown and white men who fought each other and the unforgiving terrain and the burning sun. I love it, even though, by today's standards, there is no reason that I should.

On the Sunday before the Fourth of July, we worship in a simple, beautiful, little white church that my wife's grandfather built. The pastor begins his sermon with a story about an old woman who sells her house because she read in the newspaper that most fatal accidents take place within a few miles of home. It occurs to me that she should work for the Republican National Committee. With Independence Day coming, and with the knowledge that the county will not outlaw fireworks this year on account of the recent rains, we rise to sing "God Bless America":

> God Bless America, land that I love
> Stand beside her and guide her
> Through the night with a light
> from above

I feel my voice cracking and stop singing for a moment. As we stand for Communion, Jesus reaches out to us from above the ornately carved altar. The pastor blesses each of our three children, and we eat the Body and drink the Blood of Christ. Outside, the old men line up on one side of a lawn that's greener than I remember from last year, and the women gather opposite them. The men are gray and wear their summer straw hats and hook their thumbs in their belts, boots kicking at clumps of grass. We shake hands and speak of old friends and the weather. I notice more young people around, even a few families. In town, new owners are restoring the once stately homes of the county seat, and a bigger high school is being built. Signs of hope? Maybe I am not the only one who wants to come home.

We pass through the hill country. Austin is losing the sights and sounds of what the *Dallas Morning News* called its "bohemian rhapsody"; the music scene and slow pace are being replaced by high-tech, power lunches, and sterile glass boxes are blotting out the distinctive look of the old capital. That's "progress." Barbecue and chicken-fried steaks are yielding to sushi enchiladas and vegetarian martini lunches. The small-big town is now a city with traffic jams and murders and hurry up, your appointment's at noon! "Dubya," the shallow son of a carpetbagger, must love it. But Barton Springs, the city's ice-cold swimming hole, is still there, and hold over hippie environmentalists are still fighting for it. I wish them luck and wonder why "conservatives" don't seem to give a damn about conserving anything. We destroyed Austin to save it, runs the Chamber of Commerce line.

One evening, I walk up the broad avenue from the sandy-colored capitol to the Colorado River, and a homeless man wrapped in a green trash bag is walking the opposite way, picking up litter and collecting aluminum cans. He must recognize me as a countryman. His bloodshot eyes squint as he shakes his head in disbelief and exclaims, "Damn Yankees!" I nod my head in agreement and wonder what will become of him. May God forgive us for creating a world in which there is no place for such unfortunates.

On the way out of town, I have to muster all my willpower to keep from beating the hell out of a Pakistani immigrant who lectures me on "what's wrong with America." Some of what he says is right, but I won't tell him that. When will *real* Americans muster the gumption to halt their country's colonization?

On to the Gulf Coast. Houston's sprawl has consumed the whole of Harris County and is spilling into Fort Bend County to the west. It's urban guerrilla warfare out there, with the disk jockeys, local politicos, and Lion's Club boosters trying to pretend that normal life continues. The city proper, I'm told, is now predominantly black, Asian, and (chiefly) "Hispanic," the euphemism for the excess Mexicans who conveniently—for the Mexican narco-Mafia regime and American big business—migrate to my old stomping grounds. Downtown, a heavily armed contingent of "New Black Panthers" gather to protest the impending execution of a murderous black thug named Gary Graham, the latest poster boy for the antiwhite, anti-American campaign orchestrated by the dominant elite and carried out by organized "people of color." The brave knights of black nationalism rough up an aging white man

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who has the nerve to talk back to them, but the police, under orders not to interfere with the "demonstration," do nothing. Only whites are capable of "hate," after all. A patrolman tells my folks that there is widespread anger in the ranks, but no one knows what to do about it.

The house my father built back in the mid-50's now has bars on the windows, and the clerk at the Stop-N-Go is encased in a Plexiglas cage. Warfare between black and Mexican gangs erupted not long ago on the very street where I was raised; a shoot-out took place at the end of the block. My wife and I bravely—or foolishly—continue our routine of morning walks and pass within a few yards of the baseball field at my old high school. Later that day, the police find the corpse of another apparent casualty of the gang war near the grandstands. It's hard to believe that my brothers and I, unmolested, once roamed empty fields and pastures surrounding our home. It wasn't much to look at, but it was a wonderland for boys before video games, paved streets, and city water spoiled everything.

Across town, George Bush, Sr., resides in ease and comfort behind a tall fence, accompanied to his favorite barbecue joint by Secret Service bodyguards, perhaps glancing occasionally through the bullet-proof glass of his limo. Does the old fool realize what he and his kind have done to our country? Dubya's electoral strategy seems to echo that of his father. While betraying his mostly white, middle-class voters who back the execution of such beasts on every other issue he will defend the death penalty for now, hoping to retain their support until after the election. The only real difference between Gore and Bush appears to be that they attended different Ivy League schools.

For decades, conservatives have been halfheartedly preaching about the apocalypse that will come if "somebody doesn't do something soon." Most normal people seem to agree, but why don't they recognize the grinning visage of Antichrist staring back at them in their mirrors?

Wayne Allensworth is a native Texan.

Letter From Capri

by Andrei Navrozov

What Epimenides Said

◆

Among the unaccountable peculiarities of this diary, and indeed of my general way of seeing things, is that one can never expect to learn something of Capri from my impressions of Capri. And yet, I keep asking as though to placate myself, why should it be otherwise? I am aboard the Stamos with a group of friends who had foregathered at a beachfront villa in Sabaudia and then sailed the 90-foot catamaran—built to race in the Americas Cup—to Ponza, Ischia, and Capri. I don't know anything about sailing apart from the Dutch naval terms that entered the Russian language at the time of Peter the Great. I don't know any more about the Amalfi Coast than any sunburnt accountant who has ever eaten the *insalata caprese* or appeased his girlfriend with a pair of Capri pants in cerulean cotton twill. The sea is blue and warm, obviously. The coast, as anyone who has seen the Bay of Naples on the wall of a pizzeria can recall, is rocky and picturesque. The mozzarella is delicious, and the girls are buxom. So, what is there to say?

Besides, my mind is back in Venice, where I just learned that our landlady at the Palazzo Mocenigo, the young *contessa* with the lawyer whose verbs are always in a mysterious mood, does not intend to renew our lease when it expires in the autumn. I now need to find another place to live, one that would be cheap enough not to alienate myself from the affections of friends yet grand enough to strike fear in the hearts of enemies, one that would be beautiful enough to spin tales about yet modern enough to have central heating. As there are precisely 221 buildings on the Grand Canal, and fewer than half are in private hands, the task of finding an apartment to satisfy these modest demands is formidable, even from the point of view of simple statistics. But, as so often in life and always at roulette, the problem is less statistical than it is dramatic.

A neighbor at the Mocenigo was away in Apulia this summer. One day, when the tanned and rested Signor A— returned to Venice to check up on things back home, he saw scaffolding on his balcony. The management of the *palazzo*, whom he had been petitioning for years to make some repairs to the exterior, had finally brought the masons round but apparently neglected to tell him about the scheduled works. Concluding at once that the scaffolding had not been put up with the delicacy owed to the historic importance of his ancestral home, right then and there he suffered a heart attack. He is still in the hospital. But the gruesome punch line is that, during the previous decade, Signor A— had outlived, and buried, both of his sons, young men of great charm and ability, without any appreciable harm to his famously robust constitution. Losing both of one's children in their prime, and looking nonetheless tanned and rested for it, is quite normal in this social environment. Losing some plaster curlicues on the front of your house is a different matter entirely.

I am convinced that back in 1851, at the world premiere of Verdi's *Rigoletto* at the Fenice with Teresa Brambilla as Gilda, Raffale Mirate as the Duke, and Felice Varesi as Rigoletto, the audience applauded the new opera because, subconsciously, every Venetian interpreted the court jester's madly possessive love for his daughter as an allegory of his own private feelings about his corporeal hereditament, meaning his house and all its movable heirlooms. "*La donna è . . . mobile!*" they probably thought; that's right, at last somebody's said it, a woman is just like that fine pair of ormolu commodes I stand to inherit from my aunt. "*Questa o quella?*" sang the dissolute Duke, choosing the object of his seductive attentions, but the audience probably saw an un-

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scrupulous foreigner ogling their *palazzi* on the Grand Canal ("What if it was *your* house?!"). And so on down to the final scene, in which the jester discovers his daughter felled by the vengeful blow he had sought to direct at her presumed seducer:

> *Gilda! Mia Gilda! . . . È morta! . . .*
> *Ah, la maledizione!*
> *(Strappandosi i capelli, cade sul cadavere della figlia.)*

Ah, the curse! (And, tearing at his hair, he falls upon the breathless body.) This is just how a Venetian of ancient lineage feels about the unforeseen outcome of a quarrel with an intransigent plumber or an avaricious plasterer. *Miei pavimenti*! My floors! (Only a barely audible creaking by way of reply.) *Miei stucchi*! My ceiling reliefs! (Waterlogged.) *Le cose della mamma*! Mommy's things! (Sold at auction by the wastrel uncle.) Because the truth, which every charlatan beginning with Freud has made a living obfuscating, is that any human trait can work backward as well as forward. While a Viennese psychiatrist may well want to sleep in his mother's canopied bed because it reminds him of his mother, a Venetian gentleman is far more likely to want to sleep with his mother because she reminds him of her canopied bed.

Given such intensity of natural feeling, suggesting that it may be rather easier to check into a Three-Star Kraut Excelsior & Rooms in Mantua with the virgin Gilda under the name of "Mr. & Mrs. Bill Gates" than to rent her father's apartment in Venice on an honorable one-year, tourist-accommodation lease, it is hardly surprising that when I look at a piazza in Rome, a street in Milan, or, as now, a stretch of the Amalfi coastline, all I can really see is so much easily rentable, emotionally neutral lodging. The house on the Grand Canal, or more specifically the filet-mignon portion of it called the *piano nobile*, is all the Venetian *nobil homo* has in this world. It is the habitation of his dignity. To him, the house is a machine for feeling.

An added complication is that Venice—though more cosmopolitan, both by tradition and in actual fact, than all the rest of the great Italian cities—is a small town where everybody knows everything about everyone else, and literally none of it is ever remotely true. I say this advisedly. As a Russian, I am used to treating rumor and gossip as alternative channels of information, more trustworthy, if anything, than official news bulletins and press reports. As it happens, the local paper, *Il Gazzettino*, has just astonished Venice with the news that the American owner of the Palazzo Persico, directly across the Grand Canal from the Mocenigo, "rents out"—has rented? would rent? is thinking of renting? has had a dream in which she was going to rent? Italian syntax goes all coy at this juncture—"her *piano nobile* for $60,000 a month." From this one may easily draw the mistaken conclusion that no rumor, and no gossip, can possibly be as false as what gets printed in newspapers.

In my childhood, we laughed at the question of whether it was true that a certain Armenian had won a million in the state lottery. The answer was: "Yes, it is true. But it wasn't in the state lottery, it was at cards, and it wasn't a million, it was a hundred roubles, and he didn't win, he lost." Whether the nice Mrs. Press rents out her apartment for $60,000, or $6,000, or $600 a month, there is still at least an element of truth in the *Gazzettino* story, whereas the things one hears at dinner at the Circolo, the gentlemen's club where the city elders doze over their Camparis, are total, blinding, Byzantine inventions.

"Countess M— has run off with a Colombian drug baron. The count has eczema, caused, I happen to know, by a bad oyster he once ate in Monte Carlo. Later this year he will be going to Switzerland for prolonged specialist treatment. You should speak to his nephew in Milan, who is an important publisher of books on the history of dance, and he will almost certainly let you have the apartment." Now the truth is that the nephew, a banker in New York, has not been to Italy since the age of three; that it was back in 1959 that the countess left her husband for an English racecar driver; and that the 82-year-old count, eczema or no eczema, is happily ensconced in his ancestral *palazzo* in the company of a raven-haired Brazilian dancer named Miu, whom he found through an Internet singles site. By the time you unravel the knot and follow up the lead, the old man drowns in his bath, Miu turns blonde, and the apartment is rented to a RAI television executive.

Byzantine indeed. "The worst," as Byron noted of the people of Greece in whose service he was about to lay down his life,

> is that (to use a coarse but the only expression that will not fall far short of the truth) they are such damned liars; there never was such an incapacity for veracity shown since Eve lived in Paradise. One of them found fault the other day with the English language, because it had so few shades of a Negative, whereas a Greek can so modify a "No" to a "Yes" and *vice versa*, by the slippery qualities of his language, that prevarication may be carried to any extent and still leave a loop-hole. . . . This was the gentleman's own talk, and is only to be doubted because in the words of the syllogism "Now Epimenides was a Cretan."

I suppose the moral of the story is that, after a year or two at the Palazzo Mocenigo, a man should go off and fight for Greek independence, especially if his lease has run out.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Maryland

by Brian Kirkpatrick

Liberty and License

A recent article in the *Baltimore Sun* gave a wonderful example of how the media view traditional Christianity. Under the headline "Vatican Orders Activists' Silence," the *Sun* presented the latest installment in a local saga that is beginning to rival one of the national soap operas in its duration.

In the 1970's, a Catholic priest and a nun started a ministry targeted at homosexual men and lesbians. It took the Vatican administrative machinery many years of discussion to reach a decision, but last year the two were ordered to stop their work. The *Sun* story concerned a recent meeting in Rome, at which the two were further instructed not to talk about the ministry or the reasons for its termination. If they broke the ban, they faced dismissal from the religious life: She would no longer be a nun; he would

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be laicized.

The priest bowed to the discipline of his order. The nun, however, flouted her instructions, telling reporters that the gag order was "a violation of the basic human right to self-defense." She added, "The part that I think is particularly unfair is to say to someone, 'You are forbidden to speak about this experience.' How else are we to grow as a church, as individuals or as a community unless we can speak about and reflect on our experiences? That part I found particularly offensive." One cannot appreciate the humor of her remark without knowing that the process of bringing the two into line with Church teachings took 11 years, during which the nun vigorously defended herself both within the Church and in public. The Church finally decided that there had been enough talk, and it was time for the two to do as they were told. Any parent of a quick-tongued adolescent should be able to sympathize with the Church's stance: Sometimes, enough is enough.

The rest of the article also resembled the skillful imitation of an outraged teenager. A woman from Dignity USA, a homosexual pressure group, said, "To force them to make a choice between their life in community and their call to ministry is a kind of abuse." A former coworker of the two called the Vatican's move a "cover-up," and added, "I can't help but to ask, 'What is it the Vatican is afraid of?'" (Ah, *now* I see: It was nothing but fear all along.)

Characteristically, the *Baltimore Sun* presented no rebuttal to the view that the Vatican was wrong and cruel. I presume that the reporters involved in this story, like those they quoted, have chosen to ignore the fact that no "human right" has been violated; the two can speak about their situation all they wish, and no jail, no fine, no worldly punishment will descend on them. If they wish to continue their ministry, they can do so. However, what these two cannot do is defy the discipline of the Church and violate its beliefs while continuing to function as a Catholic priest and nun.

A view of this comedy that those who do not hate all religion might understand is that this is not an issue of rights, but of keeping a contract. (I make this argument with great ambivalence, as it avoids the substantive issues that are involved. But a contractual argument might succeed in the arena in which our arguments are now conducted.) When someone joins a voluntary association—and membership in the Catholic Church is voluntary—he agrees to follow the rules. Both the nun and the priest knew when they entered the religious life that the Church took its rules seriously. Moreover, in the Catholic Church, the hierarchy sets the rules: What they decide is binding. It's not a democracy. If conscience dictates that those decisions cannot be followed, you are free to leave; sometimes, perhaps, you should do so, but fundamentally a deal is a deal. The priest is keeping his side of the bargain. The nun refuses to do so.

American Catholics frequently say such things as "The Church can't do that" or "It's my Church, too." One could reply, "It isn't yours, it's Christ's," but, of course, the dissident would respond that he knows the mind of Christ better than the Church does; and, in the past, there have been dissidents who, the Church has finally concluded, did in fact know better. However, the Church has listened to this priest and the nun for quite some time and has decided they are wrong.

Americans today are frequently confused about authority. Usually we despise it, and many of our woes stem from our refusal to exercise it when it is needed. We construe everything as a matter of rights, by which we often mean some kind of license. But when we choose to belong to an institution, we owe it things in return for membership. (Socrates had something to say about this.) Sometimes we may owe silence; at times, even an American may owe someone obedience. These reasonable points escape this nun, the *Sun*, and many others with an adolescent mindset of rebellion.

What many Americans, including this nun, cannot understand is that some hierarchies take themselves seriously: The leaders of the Catholic Church intend to follow Her rules and enforce them. Fear does not motivate them; sincerity does. They are not trying to "cover up" something; they are trying to maintain the integrity of their organization. An institution's authorities may assert their power not because they are cruel or because they want to exercise power over other people, but out of devotion to the institution, the people in it, and even, sometimes, their love of God as they understand Him. Rather like good parents.

If this farce evolves in the way such things so often do, the next step will be a federal court. There, the nun's claims about freedom of speech might conflict with freedom of religion: Do traditional believers have the right to run their own organization? In a country in which the Boy Scouts narrowly escaped being forced to accept gay leaders because the organization is a "public accommodation," I fear that, in the courts, this issue would move in the wrong direction.

Brian Kirkpatrick is a physician who lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

Letter From Croatia

by Tomislav Sunic

Changing of the Guard

◆

The birth of modern Croatia was closely tied to the paternalistic image of one man: Franjo Tudjman. A self-described nationalist and anticommunist, Tudjman ruled over Croatia for ten years until his death in December 1999. In January 2000, presidential and parliamentary elections brought to power a motley crew of reformed communists, liberals, and globalists. The new leftist government does not make any secret of its desire to reforge links with the former Yugoslav republics and to secure entry into the European Union. It has demonstrated its desire to cooperate by participating in the American-sponsored "Balkan Stability Pact" that seeks to establish friendly ties among all countries in the region.

The new government was welcomed by Western apostles of global free trade and multiculturalism. Its landslide electoral victory demonstrated that the Croatian people wanted change—even at the expense of their national sovereignty. The widespread opinion among most Croats is that their country is now poised to join the opulent West.

Upon taking power, the new government declared that "Croatia will make a radical departure from the Tudjmanesque nationalist, authoritarian, and isolationist past." Both Prime Minister Ivica Racan and President Stipe Mesic are determined to turn Croatia into a model of good democratic behavior. With the full blessing of the European Union and the "international community," Croatia's leaders now lecture neigh-

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boring Serbia on the rule of law and the advantages of economic integration with other Balkan states.

Both Prime Minister Racan and President Mesic are openly pro-European. Their task is easier than it may seem: All of Europe (both East and West) is now ruled by recycled leftists and former communist fellow travelers, supported by global plutocrats. Contrary to the claims of many conservatives, Croatia's new rulers are not hypocrites; their policies mesh perfectly with the antistate dogmas of old-style Marxism. What international communism could not achieve through class struggle and revolution, modern liberalism is attaining through "free" trade and economic globalism. In a world without national boundaries, there is no point in dismantling or safeguarding Croatias or Yugoslavias, since they will end up as part of a Brussels-based Euroslavia.

Ironically, the new Croatian leaders owe their current status to Tudjman: Without him, they would be politically nonexistent. Although dead, Tudjman still commands respect, especially among fellow nationalists—not just in Croatia, but in other parts of Europe. For his criticism of the legacies of Versailles and Yalta, Tudjman was disliked by Western opinionmakers, particularly by historians who had made a career out of the myth of antifascism.

Tudjman's flaw, however, was his provincialism; he enjoyed a typical balkanesque lifestyle of nepotism and clannish wheelings and dealings. Like the hick who comes to the big city—whether from Arkansas to Washington, D.C., or from the Croatian hinterland to baroque Zagreb—and suddenly assumes the role of public servant, Tudjman cherished lavish and extravagant parades which cost Croatia a great deal of money. He soon became a strongman presiding over an impoverished Central European banana republic, characterized by a deepening rift between a handful of *nouveaux riches* and a growing number of working poor. Surrounded by cronies and yes-men, Tudjman gradually retreated into his glass tower; despite frequent televised homilies to the Croatian people, his body language and political preferences could not hide his *Homo sovieticus-balcanicus* core. Thus, Tudjman's provincialism paved the way for the leftist palace revolution that took place after his death.

The task of the new government will not be easy. It has inherited ten billion dollars of foreign debt, 30-percent unemployment, an economy that has been stagnant for the past five years, and enormous frustration among ordinary people. Yet most Croats, at least by Eastern European standards, live well: Per-capita income is higher than anywhere else in Eastern Europe, and Zagreb is visibly cleaner and more European than any other city in Western Europe or North America.

Croatia's new elites are mistaken about the West's boundless benevolence. They believe that foreign aid will pour in from the United States and the European Union. The reality, however, is that more and more Croats face the cutthroat game of the free market. The average Croat does not care about the Western obsession with self-censorship, political correctness, and ethnic quotas. He simply wants to live well, like his virtual role models on *Melrose Place* reruns.

The new government in Croatia will also have to decide how to deal with Bosnia-Hercegovina. Not only is Bosnia populated by three irreconcilable peoples, with three different historical narratives, it also provides a training ground for thousands of U.N. troops who seek to prop up a multiethnic utopia. Once the foreign troops evacuate Bosnia, we may see a renewed Balkan killing field, with consequences that could spread all the way from Istanbul to Marseille and Frankfurt. Bosnia's high unemployment (70 percent), its war-torn infrastructure, and the lingering intra-ethnic hatred of its three peoples could make it the catalyst for the balkanization of all of Europe.

Hence, Croat nationalists oddly regard the recently departed Slobodan Milosevic as the only standardbearer of true national independence in the Balkans today. The rump Yugoslavia is the only country in Europe that has rejected the globalist game and managed to slow the rising Muslim tide in Europe.

Although Croatia's ruling coalition successfully dislodged Tudjman's party, its rank and file is riven with internal divisions. This patchwork of six bickering parties is held together by electoral spoils, ministerial appointments, and deep resentment of Tudjman's past glory. The new government has nothing to offer except opening Croatia to more Western influence with all of its devastating effects, including drug abuse and prostitution.

The new leftist elite (despite its occidental and ultraliberal verbal veneer) is an offshoot of the former communist system. It desperately seeks Western approval, yet it does not seem to realize that neither the European Union nor American taxpayers will provide a free lunch. The West will make some gestures of good will and deliver occasional sermons on the necessity of upholding market democracy in the region. But at what price? The imported liberal experiment cannot last. The new government is being pressured by the West to encourage foreign investment, yet it cannot afford the luxury of downsizing the huge state bureaucracy inherited from the Yugoslav communist system. Even Tudjman, fearing social unrest, did not dare tackle this explosive issue. Croatians are not willing to wait another ten years for an economic miracle. Moreover, nobody can predict the actions of the wealthy, conservative Croatian diaspora or the solidly entrenched, right-wing nationalist parties at home.

The biggest problem confronting Croatia (and all countries in the region) is the pervasive communist mindset, even among Croats who profess genuinely anticommunist sentiments. This schizophrenic worldview is widely ignored by the Western scholars and politicians who harp on institutional and legalistic measures that will rapidly establish market democracy. However, tolerance and civil society cannot be decreed by the United States or the United Nations, and liberal democracy cannot be learned overnight by people who have spent generations under communism. An American or German conservative may brag about having read Stephane Courtois' *Black Book*, and he may be able to map every nook and cranny of the Gulag. But unless he *lived under* communism, he will not be able to comprehend the distorted mindset of the citizens of postcommunist countries. Half a century of communist laziness, the transvaluation of all values, and the depletion of Eastern Europe's gene pool have completely ruined the prospects of forging a civil society—at least for the next hundred years. In the decades to come, in Croatia and throughout Eastern Europe, the communized masses will continue to cry out for economic security, rejecting Western notions of self-initiative and civic responsibility. Western entrepreneurs will find *Homo sovieticus* is not extinct and will be forced to reassess their investments. A citizen in postcommunist Croatia, or elsewhere in Eastern Europe, cannot change

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his stripes simply by declaring himself a disciple of global democracy.

All postcommunist countries, including Croatia, committed a fatal error in 1991: They did not immediately undertake the radical process of decommunization and re-education. But they also did not examine the essence of the only forceful alternative at hand: Western liberalism.

Tomislav Sunic writes from Croatia. His most recent book is Cool Croatia *(Vineyard Books).*

Letter From England

by Christie Davies

The English Rejoice at Scotland's Coming Independence

◆

Everyone in Britain knows that it is just a matter of time before Scotland becomes independent and reverts to medieval chaos. The English Labour Party's plan of establishing a devolved but subordinate parliament in Edinburgh to be dominated forever by inept Labour MPs recruited from the decaying slums of Glasgow has failed. The secessionist Scottish National Party will clearly win a large majority in the new local Scottish legislature at the next election, and the tartan wings of the three English parties—Labour, Liberal, and Conservative—will be destroyed. Labour cannot even depend on the votes of its traditional ethnic minority supporters, the Hibernians and the Muslims. Scottish secession is certain, either after a series of Quebec-style salami referenda or through a unilateral declaration of independence by an inebriated Edinburgh legislature.

Americans may believe that the English will be distressed at losing Scotland in the same way they still regret losing the United States; on the contrary, this is wonderful news. The current English subsidy to Scotland probably costs each individual English taxpayer more than the vast subsidies they hand out to European peasants through the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy. When Scotland goes, not only will the English lose an uncouth neighbor, but every taxpayer will be many pounds a week better off. What is more, England need never again face the menace of a socialistic government, for the Labour Party has won a majority of purely English seats only twice this century. Socialism has been a Scottish tyranny thrust upon England. The English will not even lose access to Scotland's only two worthwhile assets, its oil and its whiskey, for the Orkney and Shetland islanders who have the oil and the best whiskey will want to remain part of England rather than be exploited once again by rapacious Scots. (The islanders still call Scotland the land of "bad grain and greedy ministers.") The depth of Edinburgh's ignorance of the Orkneys can be seen in the Scottish Office's decision to subsidize the use of Gaelic in the islands, even though their original language was Norwegian. For the Scottish bureaucrats in Edinburgh, one distant island looks much like another; the decent, quiet, peaceful folk of Viking descent in Orkney get confused with the tartan-wrapped, predestinarian, Sabbath-obsessed trolls of the Gaelic-speaking Western Isles.

When Scotland secedes, the English will move fast to ensure that the Scots depart with a proper dowry. First, they will insist that conflict-ridden Northern Ireland is a Scottish responsibility. Most of the Protestant majority in Ulster emigrated there in the 17th century from the self-governing kingdom of Scotland, which is only 12 miles away from Northern Ireland's County Antrim by sea. Every year, huge contingents of tough Presbyterian Orangemen arrive in Ulster from Glasgow for the annual sectarian marches wearing tartan bonnets and waving Scotland's flag, the white on blue diagonal cross of Saint Andrew, the canny Calvinist saint who discovered the wee laddie with the loaves and fishes. Northern Ireland is Scotland's problem, not England's.

The other part of Britain that rightly belongs to Scotland is the region known as Geordylandia, the old Northeast March of England consisting of Durham, Middlesborough, and Newcastle, the southern half of the ancient Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria, which once stretched all the way from Northern England to Edinburgh and beyond. It is perhaps best known to Americans as the home of the syndicated cartoon-strip character Andy Capp. There are no differences in ancestry, speech, or drinking habits between the inhabitants of Northeast England and the Lowland Scots. The Scottish annexation of Northeast England would rid the English of yet another subsidy-gouging, economically and socially moribund region with a history of municipal corruption that rivals Scotland's. They deserve each other. The Scots can hardly refuse this expensive gift, for all the great Scottish military defeats by English armies have been the result of incompetent Scottish attempts to seize this domain. The English will now extend to the Scots the generosity they have always shown to other tiny, defeated, bigoted peoples and hand over the disputed territory, just as they did South Africa to the Boers after the Boer War.

The final gift England will bestow upon the Scots is to veto any future attempt on their part to join the European Union. The Scots deserve to be a truly free nation and to stay outside Europe. Exclusion will be good for the Scottish character. It will force the Scots to rekindle their economy by their own efforts rather than by wallowing in eurosubsidies as Ireland has done, which has caused the sudden and unexpected collapse of Irish moral standards. Merely to slide from living on handouts from London to living on handouts from Brussels would prevent the Scots from developing the sterner virtues so needed and so lacking in their previous history, in which a belief in predestination has led to an amoral antinomianism.

Americans will not be surprised to learn that we English are already hard at work eliminating all traces of the Scots from our history and culture. In particular, we are erasing all memory of the oppressive Scottish Stuart dynasty, the one that drove the Pilgrims into exile, from our history books and are considering reverting to the old royal coat of arms of Elizabeth the First, the Virgin Queen of Virginia. The English lion, which has long fought the Scottish unicorn for the crown, has finally driven it out of town. All traces of kilts, tartan, bagpipes, and other Scottish paraphernalia are being eradicated from the new purified realm of England. Tartan-wearing American preppies should adjust their dress before their next visit to London.

Christie Davies is a professor in the Faculty of Letters at the University of Reading in England.

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HISTORY

Pietas and the Southern Agrarians

by Thomas Landess

Pietas—the ancient virtue of respect for family, country, and God—is becoming increasingly difficult to practice in a nation driven half mad by guilt. Our nation's past, once uncritically revered, is now uncritically condemned. Families are regarded as breeding pens of bigotry. And God is forever sticking His nose into areas where He does not belong, showing up at public schools and football games.

Southerners face peculiar problems in this regard, because the South is the ugly, ill-behaved stepchild of America, always in need of a rap in the mouth. New Englanders celebrate the Plymouth landing and are permitted to say that the Pilgrims came here to escape religious persecution in England, even though they really came to escape religious latitudinarianism in Holland. The Midwest is allowed to forget that it was once illegal for blacks to live in some parts of that region. And no one reminds the far West of its legal persecution of Chinese immigrants well into the 20th century.

But when Southerners practice regional piety, they had better do it with the doors locked and the shades drawn. Things have only become worse in recent years:

> The Confederate Air Force, an organization of pilots who fly World War II planes at air shows, has been told that it will no longer be invited to perform at some events if the membership does not vote to change its name.
>
> A dairy fired an employee because he had a Confederate flag sticker pasted on his lunchbox.
>
> The NCAA threatened to cancel all future tournaments in South Carolina if the Confederate flag continued to fly over the capitol.
>
> A boy in Kansas was suspended from school because he drew a picture of a Confederate flag.

This latest outbreak of anti-Southern sentiment is puzzling because, according to the most recent Gallup poll on race relations, the South was the only region where a majority of blacks believed that they were treated equally. Yet the phenomenon is easier to understand when you remember that the South is the most reactionary section of the country and the least likely to embrace conformity (which is now called "diversity"). If Americans are to be prepared for globalism, they must surrender accidental differences and learn to live in the substantive world of trade. But Southerners still cherish their differences. That has to change.

Southern resistance to the forces of change may be less widespread than in the past, but it is more intense. The first attack came before the Civil War; secession was the counterattack. During Reconstruction—a period of repression that has been shamelessly prettified by recent historians—Southerners were unable to launch a counterattack, any more than Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians were able to launch a successful counterattack against their Soviet occupiers, although they tried guerrilla warfare. Next came the Era of Good Feeling, in which Broadway plays featured Southern belles who fell in love with Union officers, giving birth to a reunited nation.

Then the old attacks began anew, and the Agrarians provided the impetus for the first serious postbellum counterattack. In 1930, 12 Southerners contributed essays to a symposium called *I'll Take My Stand*. Seven of them—John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, John Gould Fletcher, Andrew Lytle, and Stark Young—were serious men of letters whose poetry, fiction, and criticism would eventually achieve national recognition. The rest were scholars of one sort or another: Frank L. Owsley was a brilliant (if controversial) historian; John Donald Wade, a biographer; H.C. Nixon, a political scientist; Lyle Lanier, a psychologist; Henry Blue Kline, a newspaperman.

The assaults on the South had recommenced following the Scopes trial, and the contributors, most of whom had connections with Vanderbilt University, felt compelled to defend their people against charges of ignorance and bigotry. Theirs was a reawakened piety toward a world they had previously taken for granted. Louis D. Rubin quotes Davidson as saying of their shared vision: "Suddenly we realized to the full what we had long been dimly feeling, that the Lost Cause might not be wholly lost after all. In its very backwardness the South had clung to some secret which embodied, it seemed, the elements out of which its own reconstruction—and possibly even the reconstruction of America—might be achieved."

The volume was published in 1930 and has never been out of print. Its publication was a defining moment for Southern self-consciousness, not so much because of what the contributors said, but because they had the wit and courage to say it. From that time forward, the South has always had its remnant of academic defenders—intellectuals heirs of the Agrarians who may have rejected some of the specific arguments in *I'll Take My Stand*, but who share the same *pietas* for their region.

From the beginning, the volume was ridiculed, mostly out of either a misapprehension or a misrepresentation of what the contributors wrote. In order to understand what they had to say about the South, it is necessary to understand what they did not say. Here are a few of the dominant errors that critics make in discussing *I'll Take My Stand*.

•*The volume is a nostalgic hymn to the past, coupled with a wistful hope of restoring the old plantation with its cavaliers, its hoop-skirted ladies, and its happy-go-lucky slaves.* In fact, the book is nothing of the sort; no intelligent reader could possibly come to such a conclusion. The essayists focused primarily on the South of 1930, and what was worth preserving in the compromised world they knew. Stark Young's contribution is the only one that takes a long look at the Old South, and he begins by saying, "If anything is clear, it is that we can never go back, and nei-

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ther this essay nor any intelligent person that I know in the South desires a literal restoration of the old Southern life, even if that were possible; dead days are gone, and if by some chance they should return, we should find them intolerable."

•I'll Take My Stand *is "utopian."* An entire thesis was written on this misconception, despite the fact that the volume is the very opposite of a Utopia: It deals with the world of real problems and real complexities, a world the Agrarians nonetheless thought worth preserving.

Indeed, the enemies of the Agrarians, the apostles of the "New South," were the utopians. They believed in the future rather than the present, in a desert transformed by industrialization into an economic and cultural oasis. Their world existed only in *potentia*—and, therefore, did not exist at all.

The Agrarians engaged in speculation about the future as well. Instead of the brave new world of the New South prophets, they predicted urban blight. As John Ransom put it in the "Statement of Principles" that preceded the essays: "The amenities of life also suffer under the curse of a strictly-business or industrial civilization. They consist in such practices as manners, conversation, hospitality, sympathy, family life, romantic love—in the social exchanges that reveal and develop sensibility in human affairs."

To determine who was "utopian" and who was realistic in their predictions, visit any major city and examine the manners, conversation, hospitality, sympathy, family life, and social exchanges practiced there.

•I'll Take My Stand *is neoconfederate, secessionist, and therefore, treasonous.* Ransom specifically rejects such a view: "No one now proposes for the South, or for any other community in this country, an independent political destiny. That idea is thought to have been finished in 1865."

On the other hand, just because the region is subject to the authority of the United States government does not mean that it must become indistinguishable from other regions. As Ransom puts it: "But how far shall the South surrender its moral, social, and economic autonomy to the victorious principle of Union? That question remains open." It still does.

•I'll Take My Stand *promotes the idea of a Southern aristocracy.* The Agrarians—with the exception, perhaps, of Stark Young—did not believe that an aristocracy existed in the South—Old or New. Steeped in European history, they knew what the word meant. Indeed, in the first essay, Ransom explains the region's social hierarchy in far less flattering terms than one would expect from a Southern apologist:

> The old Southern way of life was of course not so fine as some of the traditionalists like to believe. It did not offer serious competition against the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome. It hardly began to match the finish of the English or any other important European civilization . . . It may as well be admitted that Southern society was not . . . an institution of very showy elegance, for the so-called aristocrats were mostly home-made and countrified. Aristocracy is not the word which defines this organization so well as squirearchy . . . And even the squires, and other classes too, did not define themselves very strictly.

So much for the Agrarians' belief in aristocracy. For them, the normative Southerner was variously described as the "small farmer," the "tiller of the soil," the "yeoman." The economic unit was not the plantation but the family farm.

Critics contend that *I'll Take My Stand* is wrongheaded about economics (probably) and history (arguably), but no one can legitimately charge that the symposium was utopian, neoconfederate, or anti-American, or that it is aristocratic in its sensibilities. So why has it been so energetically condemned for so long? And why, until very recently, has every new generation of left-leaning scholars gone to war over its contents? The reasons vary.

Some of the most dedicated critics of the Agrarians were the very Southerners who believed in Henry Grady's promise of a New South, a landscape billowing with the smoke of progress. These critics saw *I'll Take My Stand* as a tree fallen across the road to paradise. In their view, the Agrarians were Luddites who wanted to deny Southerners their opportunity to keep up with the Joneses in the North.

This mentality has prevailed in the South, but Southern academics from liberal institutions and departments no longer lead the attack against *I'll Take My Stand*. For all their reactionary assumptions, the Agrarians' predictions have come true; and now, instead of attacking the Agrarians, the left defends raw land against the invasion of developers and factory owners. A few years ago, even *Mother Jones* ran a complimentary article on the Agrarians.

Non-Southern critics of the symposium have a different ax to grind: They find disturbing the very assumption that the South possesses any virtues. They remember that slavery and *de jure* segregation flourished in the region for a long time, while conveniently forgetting that slavery and *de facto* segregation also flourished in the North.

They find infuriating the assertion by some Southern historians and social critics that the Civil War was not caused by slavery alone, but by numerous economic conflicts. They believe that Southerners deliberately complicate an issue that is actually very simple—and do so to exculpate a wicked and repressive society.

Furthermore, they view this kind of *pietas* as a form of intellectual secession and, hence, an arrogant betrayal of the American ideal that they believe is expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address. They are particularly enraged when Southerners criticize Abraham Lincoln—the nation's chief secular saint, whose face, after all, is on the penny *and* the five-dollar bill.

Since few 20th-century Southerners voiced these heretical sentiments until the Agrarians brought the pot to a boil in 1930, *I'll Take My Stand* becomes a perennial target for those motivated by a Northern *pietas*, a reverence for the Lost Causes of equality and freedom—two old enemies who can no longer get along now that the nation has become industrialized and urban. These are the main reasons why both Southerners and outsiders have continued to attack the Agrarians and their intellectual heirs, such as M.E. Bradford and Clyde Wilson.

On the other hand, Southern apologists have their reasons for keeping the quarrel alive: They are frustrated by a perverse tendency on the part of their critics to oversimplify the events surrounding the Civil War, while overcomplicating the history of all other American wars. The best statement of this frustration is found in Frank Owsley's contribution to *I'll Take My Stand*, when he writes: "To say that the irrepressible conflict was between slavery and freedom is either to fail to grasp the nature and magnitude of the conflict, or else to make use of a deliber-

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ate deception by employing a shibboleth to win the uninformed and unthinking to the support of a sinister undertaking."

The "sinister undertaking" to which he refers is the transformation of the federal government into an agent for Northern industrial interests at the expense of Southern agricultural interests. While slavery was one economic factor in this power grab—which ultimately led to war—Owsley cites several others, which were part of a much larger list of economic and political conflicts between the two regions.

The federal government subsidized the maritime industry and the merchant marines with tax dollars, and these enterprises supported Northern manufacturing but not Southern farming. The federal government spent millions on internal improvements designed to help Northern factories deliver their goods to Southern and Western markets—such tax-funded projects as paved roads, railroads, and canals. The Northeast favored a government-controlled national bank to serve the needs of business interests to finance further industrial expansion. And, most of all, the North favored a tariff (the higher the better) to protect goods produced in Northern factories—which forced lower-income Southerners to buy from domestic manufacturers and to pay artificially high prices.

These criticisms seem like irrelevant carping to most 21st-century readers, North and South, who drive the Interstate Highway System, buy agricultural products hauled into local markets by freight cars, and admire Alan Greenspan. Only the tariff issue continues to resonate, largely because globalists want the United States to lower its trade barriers while allowing its "trading partners" to raise theirs. But apologists for the South's past believe these economic concerns were fundamental considerations in the increasingly bitter debate that led to secession and war.

And Southern apologists believe they have a better historical imagination than their intellectual adversaries, who, they argue, want to measure the social and political arrangements of another era by modern, politically correct standards, as if the 19th century were a Harvard sociology professor reading the *New York Times* while jetting from Boston to San Francisco.

Southerners who harbor a neo-Agrarian piety are also bemused by the blindness of many conservatives—allies in other battles—who fail to recognize the seeds of Big Government in the Union's victory, not only on the battlefield but in every other aspect of American life: Industry and urbanization have led to increasing government involvement in the lives of all people.

An agricultural society would never have required such intervention, which necessarily involves high taxes and much "ordering about." As Owsley wrote, "The North was demanding positive action on the part of the federal government, and the South was demanding that no action be taken at all. In fact, it may be stated as a general principle that the agrarian South asked practically nothing of the federal government in domestic legislation."

These are some of the historical disagreements that spring from *I'll Take My Stand* and the Southern *pietas* it exemplifies. These quarrels continue to rage, although many of the terms have been altered. Southern apologists no longer argue for the preservation of family farms, since Prudential Life and ADM do most of the nation's farming these days. Nor do they claim that industrialism inevitably leads to mass unemployment, an argument that seemed credible in 1930, at the beginning of the Great Depression.

The opponents of Southern Agrarianism no longer defend the unlimited building of factories, nor do they laud the benefits of living in big cities. As an ideology, industrialism is dead, although, like Stonewall Jackson, it died only after completely routing the enemy.

Despite the shifting grounds of debate, however, the enmity is very much alive.

Outsiders and a growing number of Southerners will continue to say, "Give up and rejoin the Union. Admit that the South was wrong and wicked, that its defeat was a blessing, that the nation we live in today is better because Lee surrendered at Appomattox. And by the way, quit flying those Confederate flags and playing Dixie at athletic contests. These things are symbols of hatred and offensive to a lot of good people."

On the other hand, unreconstructed Southerners will continue to reply, "We haven't left the Union. We're simply trying to restore what the Founding Fathers established. As for the war, if we'd won—and we could have won—we would be enjoying greater freedom and equality in our part of the continent than the Yankees have in theirs. And who are you to tell us what our symbols mean? Unlike Lee, Grant didn't free his slaves until after the war; and Lincoln wanted to ship them all back to Africa."

These quarrels—kept alive by a natural conflict between pieties—are unlikely to disappear in the foreseeable future. They are like the ancient differences between England and Scotland; the ghost of history whispers in the ears of both sides, egging them on. And since that is the case, then we might as well try to fight with some civility and enjoy ourselves in the process.

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Societas Regained: Agrarianism, Faith, and Moral Action

by H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

Allen Tate's "Remarks on the Southern Religion" (his contribution to *I'll Take My Stand*) was a plea for the recovery of a humane social order. Nourished by daily labors in the fields, the agrarian community not only produced a more stable and wholesome environment for families and workers than industrialism could offer, but an agrarian community was also more conducive to religious and moral living. Farming, by its very nature, is a communal act: The experience of tilling the soil and harvesting crops fosters a sense of self-sacrifice and an attachment to a shared community.

Genuine cultural renewal, Tate believed, could not take place without appreciating the agrarian worldview—grounded in a connection to the soil and love for the Creator that was increasingly less palpable to his generation. At the end of the 20th century, even the memory of such an existence is quickly fading.

For Tate, the root of the problem was simple: New England (or, more specifically, the Massachusetts Bay settlement and the subsequent religious and political developments in American life) had crowded out the agrarian alternative from public discourse. To the 12 Southerners who contributed to *I'll Take My*

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Stand, the American political, religious, and social experience largely stemmed from Puritan New England. In the hands of the divines, the "Puritan ethic" was incorporated into the American understanding of politics.

The New England ethic eventually developed into a civil theology which accorded special status to the American regime. America was regarded as the "New Israel," a providential gift offered to the world, a city on a hill, a light amidst the darkness of political despotism. However, alongside New England, there arose a less dogmatic and more explicitly pastoral America, one associated with the other great colonial settlement, Jamestown, which was founded more than 20 years before the Massachusetts Bay colony.

The Southern agrarian tradition produced a very different understanding of religion and politics. Against the tendency to endorse a theocratic and unitary form of life, the Southern experience accommodated divergent theological and political understandings of order. Liberty was conceived in corporate terms that included the family and community. While New England enforced rigorous moral codes, the Southern colonies were more dependent upon the English model of ecclesiastic and civil subsidiarity, relying on those closest to the situation to provide order and preside over the deliberation of disputes. In essence, the religious and political developments within the South were founded upon a spirit of localism. For example, the movement to establish state-sponsored churches met with great success in New England, while in the South a decentralized theory of control and the habit of localism in matters of church and state ensured greater autonomy and forbearance between the associations of the faithful and governing authorities.

As M.E. Bradford explained, the Southern "spirit" looked to Eden after the Fall as a model, with "the best of the gifts of this life," believing that a fruitful social and political existence was possible only when "pursued with prudence, energy, honor, and regard for a wise prescription." Contrary to the New England understanding of precision in all religious and political arrangements, the Southern agrarian worldview identified the ancient imperfections of civilization with the need for constant improvement and refinement within human nature. A society grounded upon historical reality was less likely to be distorted by ideology; conversely, it was also more reluctant to reform the defects of a worldview inherited from previous generations. Distant and overbearing sources of ecclesial and political authority were viewed with skepticism.

From the colonial period, we can witness the divergence of two understandings of religion and politics, prompting historian Nathan Hatch to suggest that one "could draw upon precious few common traditions in defining their Americanness." John Randolph, a cousin of Thomas Jefferson and an important model of statesmanship for the Agrarians, eloquently defended the Southern worldview in response to a confidant's query about his attendance at a religious gathering:

> I was born and baptized in the Church of England. If I attend the Convention at Charlottesville, which I rather doubt, I shall oppose myself then and always at every attempt at encroachment on the part of the church, the clergy especially, on the rights of conscience. I attribute, in a very great degree, my long estrangement from God to my abhorrence of prelatical pride and puritanical preciseness; to ecclesiastical tyranny. . . . Should I fail to attend, it will arise from a repugnance to submit the religion, or church, any more than the liberty of my country, to foreign influence. When I speak of my country, I mean the Commonwealth of Virginia. I was born in allegiance to George III; the bishop of London . . . was my diocesan. My ancestors threw off the oppressive yoke of the mother country, but they never made me subject to *New* England in matters spiritual or temporal; neither do I mean to become so, voluntarily.

Randolph affirmed, as would Tate and the other Agrarians a century later, the vision of a moral regime based upon subsidiarity in political and religious concerns. Subsidiarity served to divide public authority and political power, helping to perpetuate the republic. Yet it was dependent upon the virtue of the citizenry. The inculcation of virtue required a sustained effort to allow each generation to hear the "voice of tradition," as Patrick Henry urged. If citizens failed to "inform posterity," social and political life would suffer the consequences of a collective loss of memory and purpose.

Tate and the Agrarians also urged a spirit of prudence toward adopting radical innovation. They accepted the imperfections of American society and acknowledged the decline of religious faith and the concomitant growth of governmental power.

Even though the Agrarians represented many theoretical positions and geographical regions, they were united by their opposition to consolidation, and insisted upon protecting a decentralized, group-oriented society and preserving America's republican roots.

As an agrarian republican, Tate recognized that, if government could not be restricted and faith encouraged, America would lose her liberty. Tate also appreciated the limits of human experience, acknowledging the shortcomings of his own perspectives and disdaining utopianism. The South had lost its heroic struggle partly because it separated its religion from its politics. In fact, Tate's essay rightly notes that tradition, devoid of the impact of religion, tends to promote violence rather than spiritual empowerment. Tate's own life, his political and spiritual confusion, bore witness to his inability to overcome just such a struggle.

Today, the Agrarians' devotion to the preservation of an inherited worldview and way of life serves as a remarkable testimony for the rising generation. At a time when efforts to create and impose a false and destructive sense of community are widespread, we should revisit the Agrarian defense of an older, organic social order.

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In The Dark

by George McCartney

Sentiment and Sentimentality

There's a crucial difference between sentiment and sentimentality. The first is a direct, emotional response to strong provocation; the second, a self-conscious pursuit of provocation in order to revel in emotion. One is spontaneous; the other, manufactured. This distinction is a troubling one for the artist, whose business it is to fabricate occasions that elicit honest emotions. As Joseph Conrad said of writing fiction, "It's hard labor for life."

To different degrees, the two films under review this month settle for sentimentality rather than laboring to evoke genuine sentiment. The lapse is not fatal in either case, but it is disappointing.

Sentimentality might seem the least likely charge to level against Neil LaBute, director of *Nurse Betty*. His first two films seemed intent on cauterizing all vestiges of emotion from their narratives. *In the Company of Men* (1997) was a remarkably accomplished debut in which he stripped bare the nihilism at the heart of our culture's liberated sexual politics. It's a ferocious satire that wages a take-no-hostages-war on male boorishness. His second film, *Your Friends and Neighbors* (1999), continued the attack with a sourly mounted sexual rondelet staged to reveal that women as well as men exploit desire for self-aggrandizement. It's a far more tendentious—and uglier—work than the first. In the light of *Nurse Betty*, it now seems the film in which LaBute lost the detachment necessary to artistic perspective. He reveals himself to be obsessively disgusted with sex itself, portraying it as an instrument invariably wielded in the cause of sadistic vanity and leading inescapably to abuse and betrayal. This is not clarifying satire; it's pathological scorn.

While unrelenting contempt for the crudity and heartlessness of human nature may seem cynically tough-minded, it is in fact sentimentally one-sided. Such a position refuses to accept the human condition for what it is: a thoroughly homogenized mixture of sin and virtue. At their extremes, cynics and sentimentalists join forces in their denial of human reality. They present an either/or morality in which the individual is judged wholly damnable or wholly innocent. It's a moral vision redolent of America's founding folly: Puritanism.

Nurse Betty

Produced by Gramercy Pictures and Propaganda Films
Directed by Neil LaBute
Screenplay by John C. Richards and James Flamberg
Distributed by USA Films

Almost Famous

Produced by DreamWorks and Vinyl Films
Directed and written by Cameron Crowe
Distributed by Dreamworks

Nurse Betty is supposed to be a comedy in which a good-hearted woman's innocence redeems the cynics who cross her path. Although the film tries to be charming, it is willfully pretentious and weirdly sentimental. We begin with what has become a LaBute commonplace: a clueless woman in an abusive relationship with a worthless man. Betty (Renée Zellweger) is a nice person married to Del (Aaron Eckhart), a creep who manages a Buick dealership in a Kansas suburb, supplementing his income with a bit of sideline drug-dealing. Even if we weren't shown him couch-bouncing his secretary at the office, we would know he's despicable because he mocks Betty for being addicted to soap operas. They're for people who don't have lives of their own, he sneers. Ironically and quite inadvertently, he corrects this character flaw by creating a situation that literally propels Betty into her favorite soap, the ripely titled "A Reason to Love."

It all begins when Del tries to cheat his drug-dealing associates, and they decide to scare him. When matters get out of hand, they scalp and shoot him instead. Coming in on this grisly scene, Betty defends her sanity by simply erasing it from her memory. In its place, she creates an alternate reality built upon her favorite soap opera. She becomes convinced that the show's lead, the handsome and smarmily sincere Dr. David Ravell, is the man to whom she was once engaged. Naturally, she heads for Los Angeles where the show is produced in search of happiness. On the way, she explains her quest to one woman, noting that "this is my first time out of Kansas," to which her listener responds, "I should call you Dorothy!" And, indeed, like the Dorothy of Frank Baum's tale, she does get to meet the Wizard of Oz in the person of George McCord (Greg Kinnear), who plays her tirelessly caring hero on television. Behind illusion's curtain, however, McCord is just another jaded actor who long ago traded in his artistic dreams for a comfortable, steady TV berth. When the delusional Betty responds to him as though he were the show's Dr. Ravell, he assumes she is a clever method actress trying to land herself a part in the production. Mistaking her ingenuous sweetness for a dazzlingly accomplished performance, he declares, "This is totally rejuvenating. I haven't felt this way since I was with Stella Adler in New York." Betty's innocence redeems him from his professional cynicism.

Also redeemed is Charlie (Morgan Freeman), the professional hitman who has been pursuing her. Like McCord, he falls under the magic of Betty's niceness. Although he has only been in her presence a few minutes, he imagines Betty to be the woman of his dreams. She's too innocent and pure to kill. Unaccountably, he, too, is affected by the Oz fantasy: Her image appears to him dressed as Dorothy and dances with him under the Nevada stars at the very edge of the Grand Canyon.

These conceits are amusing and well acted. Kinnear is quite wonderful as the self-satisfied actor rediscovering his artistic passion. Freeman, a consummate screen performer, almost makes us believe in his soulful hitman who thinks of himself as "a garbage man of the human condition," cleansing away the more rotten members of the species—but not Betty. "You're different," he tells her, visibly transformed by her natural goodness. (Freeman is good, but the cliché of the high-minded professional killer is awfully tired.) He looks deep into Betty's troubled yet trusting eyes and tries to reassure her: "You don't need any man. You know why? You've got yourself."

This paean to self-esteem is meant to validate Betty's innocence as a redemptive force. It's here that LaBute fully re-

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veals his sentimentality: Innocence and niceness do not redeem; virtue does, and virtue requires honing on the grinding wheel of hard experience. Betty may learn she's not in Kansas anymore, but this hardly equips her to defeat wicked witches and save cowardly lions. LaBute is a talented filmmaker, but he needs to take some time off to ingest a healthy dose of Nathaniel Hawthorne, still our finest critic of sentimental innocence and obsessive puritanism.

Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous* is also compromised by sentimentality, but not as damagingly. It unreels like a mordant valentine sent to his younger self, the *wunderkind* who began writing music criticism for national rock magazines when he was 15. One only wishes his mordancy weren't so muted by his nostalgia. He has a deeply troubling story to tell; unfortunately, it's glazed over with a coating of candy-colored dreaminess. The larger portion of his audience—the very portion most in need of disturbance—will be left happily undisturbed.

An appropriately owl-faced Patrick Fugit plays William Miller, Crowe's alter ego, an intellectually precocious kid who is also remarkably innocent. We first meet him as an 11-year-old in San Diego. It's 1969, and he's walking home with his mother (Frances McDormand) from a screening of *To Kill a Mocking Bird*, discussing the film's moral implications. When they arrive home, Mrs. Miller discovers a real moral issue. Her 18-year-old daughter has brought a forbidden Simon and Garfunkel album into the house. When the girl asks her what's wrong with it, Mrs. Miller points to the cover photo. "Look," she says, indicating the singers' eyes. "They're on drugs!" Distraught, the daughter screams back, "You're destroying our adolescence!" The mother quietly replies, "Adolescence is a marketing tool." The audience at the screening I attended laughed mockingly at this. But as delivered by McDormand, it's perhaps the film's most incisive observation. The commercial exploitation of the adolescent has bedevilled our society since World War II. Still, one can understand the laughter. As written, the mother's role straddles a dramatic fence. Is she a figure of ridicule or the film's moral voice? Perhaps Crowe wants it both ways in order to suggest how helpless adults are before the juggernaut of popular culture. Still, in this case, I'd prefer a performance that sacrificed some subtlety in order to make unmistakable the cogency of Mrs. Miller's arguments. To his credit, Crowe tellingly supports her a few minutes later when the soundtrack features a Simon and Garfunkel ditty about the pleasures of smoking. The lyrics are so ambiguous that we can't tell whether it's tobacco the boys are hymning or something a tad stronger.

The film is filled with such having-it-both-ways moments. It's as if Crowe can't make up his mind about the moral implications of his youthful experiences. On one matter, however, he is resolved. In the 1960's, America's popular culture arrived at a fateful crossroads: While Harper Lee's inspiring morality tale played at the Bijou, on the stereo at home, callow boys were baying for instant gratification. We were at a pretty pass, and today it's clear we went the wrong way.

It's this pass William must negotiate as the film moves ahead four years to 1973. After writing some short pieces on rock music for his hero Lester Bangs, editor of *Creem* magazine, he's tapped sight unseen by *Rolling Stone* to cover an up-and-coming band called Stillwater. The name seems aptly chosen. Rot collects under standing water; as a fictional representative of the rock industry, this group fairly stinks with fetid self-indulgence.

Like practically all the children of our nation, only from a much closer vantage point, the wide-eyed William learns far more than any youngster should about sexual exploitation, drug use, and casual betrayal while traveling with these moral imbeciles. The band is composed of baby boomers, bred to a sickly amalgam of megalomaniacal self-righteousness and wanton hedonism. When a journalist asks the lead singer what he likes about being in rock 'n' roll, he answers with what has obviously become his mantric formula: "It's not about money and popularity; it's a lifestyle. One of us is going to save the world." Then he adds with a leer, "And the chicks are great." Their salvation consists of groupies, orgies, drugs, and—of course—the sheer unremitting din of electronic amplification that conveniently drowns out all chance of sustained reflection and any lingering qualms of conscience. In their gospel, only the road of excess can lead to the palace of wisdom. William finds all this exciting: What 15-year-old boy wouldn't? At the same time, he's disturbed by how the 30-ish band members take advantage of girls no older than himself.

To assuage his misgivings, the 16-year-old leader of Stillwater's groupies, Penny Lane (Kate Hudson) takes pains to assure William they don't feel used at all. "I always tell the girls, never take it seriously. If you don't take it seriously, you'll never get hurt." It's a moment made all the chillier by the cute manner in which this waif wrinkles her nose as she delivers her sermon on no-fault sexuality.

Time and again, Crowe underlines the destructive delusions of his characters and the culture they helped create. In one concert scene, faulty wiring connecting his instrument to its amplifiers nearly electrocutes Stillwater's lead guitarist Russell (Billy Crudup). The moment symbolically reveals the destructive nature of rock itself. After all, it's the genre's reliance on technology that is largely responsible for killing off any real musical talent that might have developed. What discipline does it take to bang out chords on an electric guitar? Crank up the volume to ear-splitting levels, and you don't have to worry about anything else. It's all so easy.

One of the film's most telling moments occurs when William finds himself with the band on a plane hired by their new high-powered agent, a slick operator who has promised them big-time success. They get caught in a thunderstorm; as the plane shivers and bucks uncontrollably, everyone on board becomes convinced that this is the end. The agent falls into remorse and compulsively confesses to a hit-and-run accident. Years ago on a dark Vermont road, he was speeding to his next engagement when he hit a man full force with his car. Instead of stopping to see whether the unfortunate fellow was alive or dead, he just kept going, never looking back. "I still see his face after all these years," he wails. When the plane manages to land safely, no one says anything more about it; the confession nevertheless lingers in our minds. It seems to me a perfect metaphor of how our commercially manufactured popular culture treats its public. American entertainment executives who certainly know better have been on a hit-and-run course for 50 years, mowing down the lives of millions of kids with salacious, vicious, and depraved music and movies. They've never looked back in their rush to the bank. But, as Penny Lane counsels, if we don't take it seriously, we won't be hurt. Or will we?

If Crowe is easier on these people than he should be, at least he's raised the right questions. C

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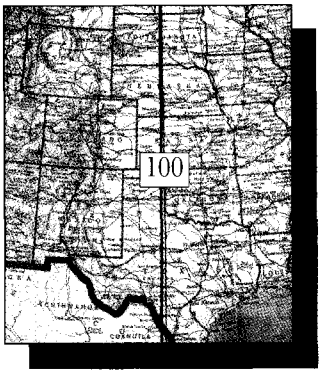
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The End of Drought



Somewhere between Muddy Gap and the old uranium town of Jeffrey City I became aware of my lungs, painfully expanding and contracting inside my denim shirt. Beyond Jeffrey City the smoke cloud was visible to the northwest, a pinkish-grey mass hanging on the mountainous horizon and planed along its upper edge by atmospheric winds: large portions of the states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming burning up, millions of acres of evergreen timber, pinyon-juniper transitional forests, and grasslands. Who's to blame? The Western Republican governors and congressional delegations finger President Clinton, the timber and ranching interests blame the National Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Land Management, environmentalists blame the timber companies and—some of them—the NFS; the federal government as an entity blames what it might call an Act of God, if it believed in Him. Probably the conflagration is the result of all of these things, plus others. In brainwashed, juvenilized, sniveling, squishy-soft, *faux*-innocent America, we always have to have someone to blame—and, wherever possible, sue—for a variety of inconveniences and unpleasantnesses that previous generations of humanity accepted as being merely the vicissitudes of life. Hard thoughts, but what else for a 297-mile, six-hour trek across bare interior Wyoming pulling two horses at 55 miles an hour, with no air conditioning in hundred-degree temperatures and nothing to eat or drink but pretzels and warm water in a gallon canteen?

North from Lander my lungs seemed to set like cement as the smoke intensified. A white plume twisted from the east slope of the Wind River mountains above Fort Washakie; from there, as far as Crowheart, the granite spine of the range was blotted by clouds of gritty smoke from the Boulder fire burning against the west slope 50 miles away. From Crowheart on to Dubois the air cleared, allowing me to discern a cherry-colored Toyota 4-Runner parked in the shoulder beneath a high cutbank and an arm waving frantically from the driver's window. Two hours behind schedule already, and now I had to stop and change a tire, or empty my canteen into an overheated radiator, or stick my head under a propped hood and pretend I understand something about what goes on in an engine compartment. There are times I wish chivalry were dead, not just paraplegic and comatose. Oddly, the face in the window looked familiar. I'd forgotten Norma went and bought a new car.

I followed with the horses on the washboard road winding back through foothills to Torrey Lake. The hills were brown from drought, no green showing except for the blackish forms of the pine trees rising against the knobby cliffs. The brown was eerily uniform, and the dead grass crunched underfoot. We made camp on a rise above the lake, unrolling the sleeping bags under a pine tree and setting the gas stove with two attachable gas canisters on a patch of bare ground surrounding a fire ring left cold all summer by order of the Forest Service.

"This is terrible," I told Norma, looking about at the stricken country. The southeastern part of the state around Laramie, while affected by the drought, hadn't prepared me for what I'd seen this afternoon. "It's like visiting a dead world."

"There's absolutely no moisture left in the soil at all."

"They ought to just let it burn," I said. Somehow, ashes and scorched earth seemed a more natural prospect than the unlit funeral pyre before us.

We spent the better part of the following morning consolidating and packing gear, while drinking coffee unsatisfactorily boiled on the gas stove. It was past noon before we started up the Whiskey Creek trail, skirting low-lying sagebrush parks for the first mile or so before the trail steepened underfoot and the dry forest, heated by sunlight striking between the spires of the trees, closed in. Fat and soft from a lazy summer, heavily lathered along the flanks and between the hind legs, the horses halted regularly to blow and scent the piney air, putting their ears forward and turning their heads from side to side.

"We should be almost to the Noonday Rocks," Norma, riding behind me, said.

"Why the Noonday Rocks?"

"I don't know. I think it's an Indian name."

Half a mile farther on yellow-gray rocks, spotted with sunlight and lichen, appeared through the trees. Past the tree line was a park bounded on one side by a stony parapet standing at an angle to the trail. I consulted my compass, which showed the granitic mass aligned along a nearly exact east-west axis. Apparently, the ancient Shoshone had been right on time for Brew & Burger at lunch hour.

We stopped for lunch in a grove of limber pine, surrounded by vaguely observant whiteface cattle grazing the alpine grass beside Whiskey Creek, now only a dry runnel. Before mounting up again I had Norma take a photo of me beside the horse, wearing a straw hat, bandana neckerchief, chaps, and a holstered .41 magnum revolver on my hip, to send to Andrea Marcovicci on her return from Hawaii. Then we rode on, uphill through patches of scrub willow, past stands of gnarled Krummholz pine, to the bare summit of Whiskey Mountain, wind-polished at over 11,000 feet of elevation, from where the topography of a substantial portion of northwest Wyoming lay spread around: to the east the Owl Creek Mountains; the Absarokas in the northeast (including the southeast corner of Yellowstone Park); Lava Mountain and Togwatee Pass due north; to the west and 75 miles out, the snaggled silhouette of the Grand Tetons, darkly sinister, wreathed with smoke. Above Shale Mountain, black clouds were building, headed our way. They didn't look thunderous, but you never can tell. Once, in an unprotected alpine meadow only 20 or 30 miles from here across the Continental Divide, I found the melted shoes of a horse struck by lightning, the carcass—hooves included—long since rot-

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ted into the thin topsoil. No sign of the sheepherder riding him, either.

"What's wrong with Larki?" I asked, turning in the saddle.

"She won't move."

"What do you mean, won't move?"

"You're looking at what I mean, aren't you?"

Only dudes and amateurs ever strike a horse. Fortunately, there are other forms of discipline available to the seasoned horseman. When a couple of these had been employed, we rode on at a trot over the summit and dropped down into the shelter of the timber below, where the trail turned south and continued on across the face of the mountain, contouring through thick forest in the direction of Ross Meadow, only two miles distant according to the topo map.

Ross Meadow, with its pond of tea-colored water in which leaf molds and various other ingredients float (and swim), in this season of drought was the only source of water we'd seen since Whiskey Creek expired two thirds of the way up the other side of the mountain. Of course, we had a large supply of Jim Beam along, but still not enough to share with the horses. Ross Meadow, therefore, was camp. We unloaded and picketed the animals, assembled the gas stove, and went to the pond for water. It was not, in fact, Evian, but we planned on boiling it 15 minutes to kill the Giardia parasite, and old Jim is famous for covering a multitude of sins when he has to. The first gas canister expired before we'd finished sterilizing the first bucket, so we ate a cold supper in the interests of conservation, stretched our bedrolls under a tree, and fell asleep early, half drunk on Beam and starshine.

After breakfast next morning, we snubbed the horses close to a couple of pine trees and set out on foot for Ross Lake, two miles out and 1,500 vertical feet below camp. The day was overcast, so we brought along rain gear in the event of a miracle called rain; also lunch, the bottle of Jim Beam, matches, maps, *et cetera*, tucked inside my daypack.

At the top of the switchbacks dropping 500 feet in an eighth of a mile, we paused to admire the lake stretched in a granitic trench beneath glaciers hanging from the Continental Divide, then started the descent. The trail, difficult enough on foot, was a horseman's nightmare: Scattered horse apples at intervals suggested the last horse to attempt the rockfalls and granite slides felt the same way. I worked my way down cautiously and proceeded ahead on level ground a few hundred yards before halting in a drizzle of rain to pull the poncho from the daypack and draw it over my head. Norma was out of sight behind me; still negotiating the switchbacks, I supposed. I started forward again, then stopped. Hiking is supposed to be a companionable affair, and my companion couldn't be more than 30 or 40 seconds behind. I waited a minute—two minutes, three—before retracing my steps to the switchbacks, watching the ground for footprints among my own, vaguely apprehensive. When I reached the base of the cliff and started up the first switchback, I knew we had a problem. Heart attack? A blow to the head from a fall? Standing in the trail, I turned outward to the depthy wilderness and shouted, through megaphone hands between the trees—"NORMA!"—then waited to listen. "NORMA!"

Far below the trail, a faint voice responded from a timbered basin. "I'M LOST!" it seemed to say. Or perhaps it was just my imagination. We'd never had anyone lost from camp before.

I took a compass reading on the direction of the call, and considered. Beyond the point where the trail struck level ground it crossed a dome of exposed granite, an easy place to lose one's way. Finding no sign I continued on a hundred yards, checking and rechecking the compass, until I came to a cliff falling a sheer 100 feet to the basin from where the sound had come: an ideal broadcasting station. I called again, then drew the .41 magnum from under the poncho and fired a shot in the air. As the echoes died away among the peaks, the cry came once more, closer this time and clearer: "KEEP TALKING!"

It took half an hour to call her in, through heavy timber toward the curving wall of cliff beneath my feet until she emerged at last, a small figure in a purple parka picking its way toward the forest edge. We spent another 30 minutes finding a way up for her, and then she was safe beside me in the drizzle, her breath coming hard and water trickling from the end of her nose.

"How did you ever manage to find your way down *there*?"

"I don't know. I knew we had a chance if you just kept talking and didn't try to get down in the woods with me."

"I knew better than to do *that*. If worst came to worst, I was going to go back to camp, take Star, and ride all night to bring help from town."

"I was going to try and find Torrey Creek and follow it up to the lake, where there might be someone camped. I was so scared when I realized I was lost!—without a map, a compass, matches, food."

"After this we both carry a pack, every time. My main worry was this rain would turn to snow and you'd be out all night without protection."

"I'd have survived, but it wouldn't have been a pleasant experience."

From the direction of the trail, a female voice drifted. "Oh," it said in a singsong manner, "I hear people speaking!"

A pale, pointy head appeared around a tree before The Wanderer emerged: small and slim, wearing translucent rain gear over hiking shorts, the hood drawn up over a black baseball cap, and carrying an aluminum walking stick in each hand, like ski poles, on her back a pack nearly as big as she was.

"I'm sorry about the gunshot," I told her. "We had someone lost for a while."

"I didn't hear any gun," the girl said, pulling a Power Bar from under the raincoat and taking a bite of it, "just the voices. I've been out 11 days already. If I ration myself, I've got enough food to last me another day and a half."

We asked what her destination was, and she said the Torrey Lake trailhead. When Norma explained the trail had been closed since the previous year on account of an active mudslide, the girl smiled.

"If I don't get down to the car by tomorrow night, they'll send the helicopters out looking for me."

We reminded her the rain could activate the slide and invited her to stay over at our camp for the night. She looked pleased to be asked, but shook her head.

"I half expected to be burned up in a forest fire anyway, so I guess I'll go ahead and risk getting buried in mud instead. If you see my green Dodge Duster in the parking area when you come out, you might give the Forest Service a tip where to look for my body. If they feel they *have* to have it."

She accepted a handful of the gorp Norma offered her, showed us her will-o'-the-wisp smile, and moved off into the forest, her muscled brown calves pumping beneath the hem of her raincoat.

"Well," Norma said, "we started off this morning to see the lake."

"Sure," I agreed. "Let's go on down there now, and see it." c

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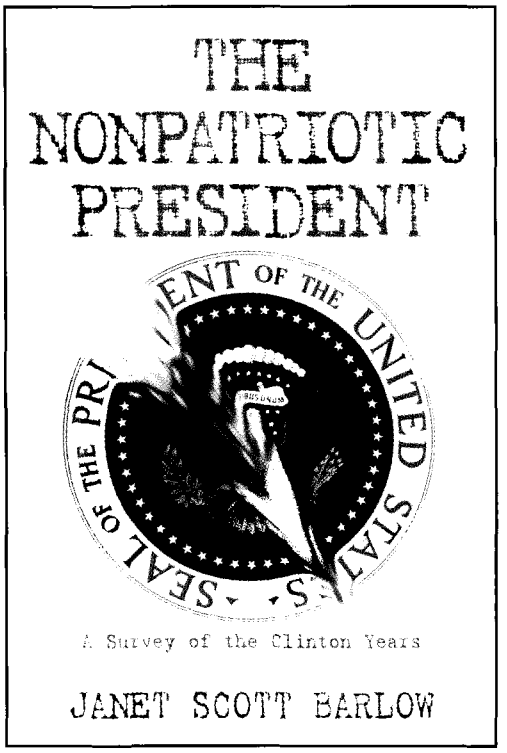

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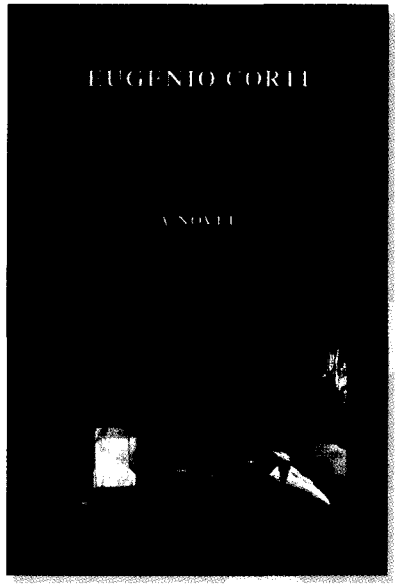

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